

**STRANGERS TO BROTHERS:  
INTERACTION BETWEEN SOUTH-EASTERN  
SAN AND SOUTHERN NGUNI/SOTHO  
COMMUNITIES**

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## ABSTRACT

*There is presently considerable debate as to the forms of relationships established between hunter-gatherers and their non-forager neighbours and whether relationships which are documented as having been established significantly affected these hunter-gatherer societies. In southern Africa, particular attention has been paid to the effects of such contact on hunter-gatherer communities of the south-western Cape and the Kalahari. The aim of this thesis has been to assess the nature and extent of relationships established between the south-eastern San and southern Nguni and Sotho communities and to identify the extent to which the establishment of these relationships may have brought about changes in the political, social and religious systems of south-eastern hunter-gatherers. General patterns characterising interaction between a number of San and non-San hunter-gatherer societies and farming communities outside the study area are identified and are combined with archaeological and historiographical information to model relationships between the south-eastern San and southern Nguni and Sotho communities. The established and possible effects of these relationships on some south-eastern San groups are presented as well as some of the possible forms in which changes in San religious ideology and ritual practice resultant upon contact were expressed in the rock art. It is suggested that the ideologies of many south-eastern San communities, rather than being characterised by continuity throughout the contact period, were significantly influenced by the ideological systems of the southern Nguni and Sotho and that paintings at the caves of Melikane and upper Mangolong, as well as comments made upon these paintings by the 19th century San informant, Qing, should be interpreted with reference to the religious ideologies and ritual practices of the southern Nguni and Sotho as well as those of the San. Other rock paintings in areas where contact between the south-eastern San and black farming communities was prolonged and symbiotic may need to be similarly interpreted.*

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The migration of Sotho communities from the Transvaal onto the southern Highveld and the expansion of southern Nguni communities through mixed grasslands to the edge of the sour grasslands after A.D.1000 brought these farming communities into direct contact with south-eastern San hunter-gatherers. While the immigrant farmers may have interacted indirectly with these San communities prior to this time through trade networks, they now came face to face with the original inhabitants of these areas. The nature and intensity of the relationships established between the south-eastern San and their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours as well as some of the effects of these relationships on the social, political and cultural life of the San are explored in this thesis.

A realisation of the importance of contact between hunter-gatherers and adjacent communities for understanding these societies is reflected in the number of studies dealing with this subject in recent years. Whereas hunter-gatherer political and social systems were previously viewed as adapted to and formed by their hunting and foraging economies it is now often suggested that they are shaped, to a large extent, by contact with neighbouring non-forager communities (Murphy and Steward 1956; Fox 1969; Headland and Reid 1989; Wilmsen 1989). The implications of this paradigm shift for our understanding of both historic and prehistoric hunter-gatherer societies have been considerable and have required archaeologists and anthropologists to re-assess assumptions of economic, political, social and ideological continuities in hunter-gatherer societies from the Late Stone Age (hereafter L.S.A.) to the present. A number of archaeological and historical studies have recently been undertaken which focus on San communities of the south-western Cape and the Kalahari, and the effects of interaction between these groups and Khoi, Tswana and other non-forager communities. This "revisionist" debate is directly relevant to the south-eastern San and the relationships that they established with southern Nguni and Sotho communities, but these relationships have received relatively little attention. I hope to at least partially redress this imbalance here.

The areas occupied by the south-eastern San are of importance for rock art studies, in particular, since it is here that some of the finest and most complex rock paintings in southern Africa are to be found. It has been argued that most of these paintings are symbolic expressions of the experiences of San shamans while in trance,

and that rites and symbols depicted in the art are derived exclusively from San ritual practice and religious ideology. It is important, however, to ascertain whether the effects of contact were represented in the evolving symbolic order of south-eastern San communities experiencing change due to contact and how such changes may have been expressed in the rock art. The possible effects of contact on the rock art of the south-eastern San have been discussed by Campbell (1987), but within a paradigm of rock art studies which assumes the existence of a structural continuity in the religious ideology of San groups throughout the contact period - and for millennia before this time. I argue in this thesis that such assumptions of continuity in the cognitive system of all San groups may need to be re-assessed.

I have adopted a four-fold approach to my analysis of south-eastern San - southern Nguni/Sotho relations. Studies of interaction between certain hunter-gatherer groups and farming communities outside the study area are surveyed in the next two chapters in order to assess whether general or specific patterns of interaction can be identified which may be applicable to the interface between the south-eastern San and the southern Nguni/Sotho. Although such a survey might allow us to identify a wide range of relationships commonly established between hunter-gatherers and farmers, of particular relevance to the section of this thesis which deals with southern African rock art is the extent to which hunter-gatherers and neighbouring farmers in regions outside those occupied by the south-eastern San were drawn into the cultural and ritual life of farming communities, with resultant changes in their systems of religious ideology. While it is not assumed that these patterns are automatically relevant to interaction within my study area, they point to the possibility of similar relationships having been established between south-eastern San and black farming communities as well as the possibility that similar changes in the social organisation and ideology of the south-eastern San occurred as a result of their interaction with the southern Nguni and Sotho. In conjunction with a scrutiny of the historical record and oral traditions relating to interaction between the south-eastern San and black farmers, this should allow us to better assess the validity of theories of the rock art that rest on the assumption that San ideology remained essentially unchanged during the contact period.

Published and unpublished historical reports as well as archaeological studies and recorded oral traditions relevant to relationships which are known to have been established, or which may have been established, between the south-eastern San and southern Nguni and Sotho communities are collated in chapters 4 and 5. Archaeological and written historical data relating to interaction before c.1800 are somewhat fragmentary and we must rely to a large extent on oral traditions and histories to

reconstruct the forms of relationships characterising San interaction with black farmers before this date. A commission of enquiry in 1850 into cattle thefts by the San, aided by some southern Nguni and Sotho groups, provides valuable written documentation of relations between the south-eastern San and farmers at this time, however, and a number of first-hand accounts of relationships existing between the San and black farmers were recorded after this date which greatly increase our knowledge of interaction during the 19th century. After the cessation of raids by the San on the farms of Europeans in 1872 the San become virtually invisible in the published historical record and we depend largely on the evidence of San descendants and southern Nguni/Sotho informants to reconstruct relationships established between residual San communities and individuals who were living on the periphery of southern Nguni/Sotho society or who had already been absorbed into black farming communities.

All the above data are drawn upon to inform a general discussion of documented and hypothesised relations between the south-eastern San and southern Nguni/Sotho communities in chapter 6. The established and possible effects of trading relationships and marital ties existing between these groups on the economic, political, social and cultural systems of south-eastern San communities are discussed, including the documented and hypothesised effects of interaction on the religious ideology and ritual practices of these communities. Finally, the implications for rock art studies of changes in San society and ideology resultant upon contact are discussed in chapter 7, with specific reference to the testimony of Joseph Orpen's Maluti San informant, Qing, regarding rock paintings at Melikane and upper Mangolong.

#### NOTE ON USE OF TERMINOLOGY

I have variously referred to the southern Nguni and Sotho as black farmers, black farming communities, agropastoralists, agriculturists and Bantu-speakers. I have varied my use of these names largely to avoid what would be a monotonous repetition of a single term throughout my text, but all these terms can be used to refer to southern Nguni and Sotho communities, although it has been suggested that some are preferable to others (Maggs 1992).

There is greater debate concerning the use of an appropriate name for southern African hunter-gatherers. All those names available to us, such as San, Bushman, Batwa and Baroa were probably pejorative terms applied to hunter-gatherers by others. Parkington (1984) has suggested that "Bushmen" refers to ethnically-mixed groups of bandits and freebooters rather than true hunter-gatherers, but Gordon (1984) and

Guenther(1986) choose to use this word partly because of its associations with banditry - and hence, they argue, with resistance to colonial incursion. I have chosen to use San for two reasons. Firstly I am not convinced that these hunter-gatherers or their descendants would want to be labelled as bandits; and secondly there is some evidence that 18th century southern African hunter-gatherers referred to themselves by a word related to "San". According to Somerville (1979:75) one of the names by which "Bosjesmans" referred to themselves was *Saap* (*Canna* and *Hoozooam* are also mentioned). It is quite possible, however, that no generic term existed for southern African hunter-gatherers which was used by these people to collectively refer to themselves. A case can, moreover, be made for the use of many, if not all, of the existing terms presently employed to describe southern African hunter-gatherers and I am not suggesting here that San is the only name which should be employed to refer to southern African hunter-gatherers.

The variety of forms of hunter-gatherer societies that resulted from contact with other societies suggests, in fact, that a wider range of terms may need to be employed to refer to San-speakers which more accurately describe the processes of social, political and cultural hybridisation which occurred as southern African hunter-gatherers were increasingly drawn into the ambit of other societies. Thus we find terms such as "pastorforager" appearing in the literature, and they will probably need to be supplemented by other terms such as Sotho-San, Phuti-San etc. which reflect the mutual influence of hunter-gatherer and farming communities upon each others' societies as well as intermarriage between the different groups.

#### NOTE ON SOURCES

While most of the information drawn upon in this thesis is derived from secondary sources, some unpublished documents lodged in the Cape archives as well as the Morija Archives and Cory Library were also consulted. Particularly useful material was obtained from a series of articles by the historian Azariel Sekese published in Leselinyana La Lesotho. I have also drawn to a limited extent on oral material relating to residual San communities and individuals living in Lesotho during this century and their interaction with the Sotho - collected by me from informants in 1992 during the course of two field trips to Lesotho. I have attached a summary of these data as an appendix to this thesis, but without any assessment of the accuracy or validity of my informants' accounts of Sotho-San relations as further research may need to be conducted before it can be properly evaluated. Records of the oral testimonies taken are held by the author and may be consulted on request.

A word needs to be said concerning both the validity of published oral traditions cited in this study and the manner in which they were collected. The strengths and weaknesses of Ellenberger's "History of the Basuto", for example, on which I have drawn extensively in my analysis of Sotho-San relations, have been discussed by Gill (1992), and Kunene (1977) has commented on the articles on Sotho history which Sekese wrote for publication in *Leselinyana La Lesotho*. While the research methodology of Ellenberger and other 19th century historians such as Sekese may be open to criticism, they had the great advantage of being extremely well-acquainted with Sotho society and, in many cases, of being able to interview informants who had themselves participated in the events that they were relating. When he was collecting information about the Phuti, including their relations with the San during the 19th century, Ellenberger was able to get the history of the Phuti from chief Moorosi firsthand. Likewise he was given the history of the Taung by their chief, Moletsane, himself (Gill 1992:19).

Nor did Ellenberger hesitate to present traditions he had collected which were at variance with the orthodoxy of Theal's interpretations of southern African history which portrayed Bantu-speakers as the inveterate enemies of the San. Ellenberger, as well as Orpen and Sekese, through their intimate acquaintance with the Sotho and the traditions of these people, were able to correct many of the erroneous facts and interpretations presented by Theal and other 19th century historians concerning relations between the Sotho and San (Gill 1992). They pointed out that, while many instances of conflict occurred between groups, Sotho-San relationships were often also characterised by co-operation and intermarriage. Insights such as these, which in many respects represented a great step forward in our knowledge of early Sotho-San relations, would doubtless have been considered surprising in the 19th century, and the significance of what these early researchers of Sotho oral history and tradition revealed concerning Sotho-San relations is still often not fully realised.

Moving from specific records of oral tradition and histories collected by Ellenberger and others to the more general question of the reliability of oral historiography compared to written history can quickly lead us into deep philosophical waters as we consider the ways in which historical "knowledge" is acquired - a problem which has been addressed by Carr (1962) and many others. The relative merits of oral and written historiography have been discussed by Vansina (1965) and Henige, who has remarked that "oral materials share with written sources the quality of being prisms on the past rather than windows" (1982:5). It might be argued that the light is more noticeably bent by the custodians of oral tradition and that we need to be more cautious

in our use of their material than we are required to be with written sources. There are too many examples of written accounts of the same historical events which differ fundamentally from each other, however, for us to be able to assert that written history is invariably a more "accurate" depiction of the past than are oral traditions and histories. Both forms of historiography will reflect the particular biases of the historian, but we can dispense with neither in our attempts to reconstruct the past.

## CHAPTER TWO

### SOME NON-SAN HUNTER-GATHERER GROUPS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH FARMING COMMUNITIES

The forms taken by interaction between a number of non-San hunter-gatherer groups and neighbouring farming communities are examined in this section. All these hunter-gatherer groups occupy areas adjacent to farming communities and have established symbiotic relationships with them, usually based on the exchange of goods and/or services, which may provide clues as to the forms of relationships established between the south-eastern San and the southern Nguni and southern Sotho.

#### 1 THE AGTA

The Agta are the least acculturated of the Philippine Negrito group. They live largely by hunting and fishing in areas fringing the settlements of Palanan peasant farmers, from whom they are differentiated ethnically and in physical type in a number of respects. They nevertheless speak languages similar to those of the Palanan and have extensive contact with them, which is based to a considerable extent on trade (Petersen 1978). They mainly inhabit the Sierra Madre, a rugged chain of mountains covered in forests which run parallel to the Pacific Coast. The Palanans, on the other hand, are distributed predominantly in flatland areas bordering the Palanan and Disikud rivers. While the Agta produce some domestic foods, planting is an incidental and sporadic activity for most of them. Their economy is very different from that of the Palanans and they produce limited vegetable foods, whereas the Palanans obtain less protein than the Agta. Petersen (1978:339) thus suggests that "these two populations ..... present optimum opportunity for economic interdependence".

It is clear from the archaeological record that trade between hunter-gatherer Negritos and farming communities in the Philippines has occurred for a considerable period of time. "The archaeological evidence establishes that extensive international trade in forest products has been going on throughout much of insular Southeast Asia for at least the last thousand years and that nomadic forest peoples, including Negritos, have been the collectors and primary traders" (Headland and Reid 1989:45-46). This trade may have occurred as early as 5,000 years B.P., and it is probable that the ancestors of the Agta were interacting with farmers by the middle of the second millennium B.C. (Headland and Reid 1989:46). The fact that all Philippine Negritos speak a language

belonging to the same family as those of non-Negritos suggests intensive and early interaction between these groups, with the language of the dominant non-Negrito immigrants replacing that of the Negritos (Headland and Reid 1989:46-47). It has been suggested, moreover, that Negrito society evolved into its present form as a direct result of the establishment of trading relationships with farmers (Headland and Reid 1989). They propose that, with the advent of farming groups in the Philippines, Negritos moved into the more mountainous areas in order to exploit the presence of forest products in these areas. These products were then traded with Philippine farmers and traders from other areas who, for nutritional or other reasons, desired them. In return, Negritos received tools and domestic carbohydrates.

Griffin (1984) has suggested an alternative model, based on the assumption that the Agta and other Negrito groups may not have needed to interact with farmers to obtain carbohydrates, cultivating their own crops. Griffin considers that there is little evidence for the proposed linear evolution of Negrito communities from subsistence hunter-gatherers to hunter-gatherers depending on trade with farmers for their subsistence, and proposes that a wide range of foraging strategies may have been adapted or relinquished as specific conditions of population group contact and resource availability fluctuated. Instead of distinct populations of foragers and farmers having existed in the past, "prehistoric north-eastern Luzon may have been occupied by generalists, who hunted, fished and planted crops in swiddens for thousand of years, adjusting their degree of dependence on various subsistence systems according to local short-term perturbations like those found in the region today" (Griffin 1984:116).

Whatever the nature of earlier relations between Negritos and immigrant farmers, it is clear that symbiotic relationships between these groups existed in historic times. "A number of 18th century reports make it clear that the Agta were involved in intense symbiosis, including patron-client relationships, with Christianized farmers and trading forest products for rice, tobacco, metal tools, beads and pots" (Headland and Reid 1989:45). These relationships have continued until the present day and are described below.

Trading relationships presently existing between Agta hunter-gatherers and Palanan farmers are mainly based on exchange of protein for carbohydrate foods. This form of trading relationship has been termed "tandem specialization" by Petersen (1978). "In cases of tandem specialization ethnic boundaries may serve, in part, to demarcate and maintain discrete interdependent subunits within a larger economic system" (Petersen 1978:348). Such systems of exchange are of great importance, not only for the Agta, but

also for the Palanan, who are equally dependent on the goods and services provided by the Agta.

The Agta, living on the edge of Palanan settlements, provide the Palanan with forest products such as deer and pig and receive corn and *camote* (yam) in return. Agta never exchange for the meat of domestic animals, to which they have a great aversion (Petersen and Petersen 1977:542). Agta and Palanans thus widen and diversify their food web through exchange. This is an effective means of ensuring survival without increasing labour intensity (Petersen 1978). Food exchange represents only a part of Agta-Palanan economic interdependence, however. Agta not only trade meat with Palanans, but also their labour, helping the farmers in their fields at times when their need for labour is critical. The reluctance of other Palanans to work for wages in their neighbours' fields makes it necessary for the Palanan to enlist the help of Agta in this way.

There are also social, political and ritual ramifications to the trading relationships established between Agta and Palanans. The social and ritual ramifications are evident in the development of *ibay* (special friend) relationships which commonly exist between an Agta and a Palanan, both partners being married males. The *ibay* relationship is the medium for most transactions between Agta and Palanans. "While non-*ibay* exchanges of protein for carbohydrates do occur, the *ibay* relationship is unique in that it demands a commitment for regular exchanges, it allows for extension of credit, and it commits the partners to other economic transactions as needed" (Petersen and Petersen 1977:547). *Ibay* partners depend on each other for support at times of crisis, such as when an Agta needs medical attention or when a Palanan requires a guide and bearer to cross the mountains. Probably the most important advantage of the relationship for Palanans is that it commits their partners to work for them as field labourers at certain times of the year (Petersen 1978).

The development of the close personal relationships which characterise the *ibay* has had the effect of drawing Agta and Palanans closer together in a way that might not occur in an impersonal market relationship. The *ibay* extends the individual's personal relationships beyond the boundaries of his own group - as Sharp (1952) observed in connection with Australian aboriginal groups, where similar relationships developed between men trading stone axe heads with partners from other groups. As with trading partners amongst Australian aborigines, *ibay* partnerships involve more than commercial transactions, and a mutual influence on the religious beliefs and ritual practices of Agta and Palanans has resulted (Petersen 1978).

It is clear that the system of tandem specialization which characterises the economies of Agta and Palanans is one that confers benefits on both hunter-gatherer and farmer. The resource base of both groups is broadened and diversified providing a "safety net" should the economies of either be subjected to abnormal stress. The maintenance of largely different lifeways by Agta and Palanans and the exchange of foods and products derived from different ecological niches is, in many ways, an ecologically sound strategy for survival (Petersen 1978).

One of the effects of such successful co-operation between hunter-gatherers and farmers may have been to reduce the need for technological change and, considering the length of time over which it is known that Philippine Negritos and farmers were interacting, this may have affected the course of prehistory in the region (Petersen and Petersen 1978). This may well have been the case in areas other than the Philippines. Exchanges of goods and services between hunter-gatherers and farmers may have inhibited intensification of hunter-gatherer economies and been partially responsible, in some cases, for the survival of hunter-gatherer communities until a later stage than would have been possible had exchange relationships not been established.

## 2 THE PUNAN

The Punan are hunter-gatherers living in Borneo who trade extensively with neighbouring Dayak farmers. They occupy forested areas on the headwaters of rivers and trade forest products such as rattan, aloe wood, camphor, beeswax and nuts with farming communities on the lower reaches of these rivers. In return they receive salt, tobacco, iron, matches, cloth and sometimes wealth tokens such as dragon jars, gongs and money from the farmers (Hoffman 1984).

The Punan were long considered evolutionarily antecedent to the sedentary agriculturists of Borneo. They were believed to be descendants of aboriginal hunter-gatherers now forced to trade forest products with farmers in order to supplement the diminishing returns received from hunting and gathering. The Punan may, however, in fact hunt and gather in order to support themselves while collecting forest products - subsequently traded with farmers for domestic foods upon which they largely depend for their subsistence. According to Hoffman (1984:123): "They do not trade in order to remain nomads, but rather... they remain and possibly even become nomads in order to trade.... Trade is not just another thing the Punan do: it is the thing they do most". Hoffman suggests that, rather than being "leftover relicts from the Pleistocene" the Punan

were once farmers who realized the potential for trade in forest products and consequently occupied forested areas further up those rivers on which farming communities had settled. They did not necessarily move into the forest because they failed as farmers but rather because they wished to exploit a particular ecological niche for the purposes of trade. "The picture that emerges is not one of cultural retrogression, but of economic specialization" (Hoffman 1984:145).

Close ties are maintained between the Punan and their farmer trading partners further down the rivers, and when a farming community moves the Punan group associated with it will set itself up in primary forests further up the river along which the farmers have settled. These ties have led to considerable similarity in the cultures of Punan and particular farming communities and "the corollary to this proximity and affiliation between specific Punan groups and specific sedentary agricultural peoples is that any one Punan group is almost always closer in customs and language to its affiliated sedentary people than it is to other Punan groups living in other regions" (Hoffman 1984:132). Punan groups differ greatly in language and in most other respects other than their hunter-gatherer lifeway, so that the term Punan, in effect, refers to the location and mode of subsistence of these people, rather than implying a set of related cultural traits, and Punan groups generally identify more closely with their affiliated farmers than with other Punan groups.

Trade between the Punan and farmers, seems then to be the *raison d'etre* for the Punan hunter-gatherers' lifeway and for their occupation of the primary forest. They appear to be "commercial" or what Hoffman terms "secondary" hunter-gatherers - groups related to farming peoples who abandoned farming at some stage for the advantages that could be derived from collecting forest products for trade. They can be contrasted with "subsistence" or "primary" hunters and gatherers - aboriginal peoples still retaining a hunter-gatherer lifeway and for whom there exists no evidence of a prior agricultural adaptation. Hoffman (1984:147) remarks, moreover, that a "serious re-examination of the ethnographic record in its historical perspective may well indicate that commercial hunting and gathering not only accounts for most hunter-gatherer groups of the ethnographic present, but also explains why the hunting and gathering adaptation has persisted to the present day".

### 3 THE KADAR, BIRHOR, CHENCHU, VEDDA AND NAYADI

In his analysis of these five South Indian hunter-gatherer groups, Fox (1969) suggests that these groups hunt and gather in order to trade with farming communities

rather than trade to supplement an economy based on hunting and gathering for subsistence. In this sense, Fox argues, these people are what he terms "professional primitives" - specialised productive units geared towards trade in forest products and similar in many respects to caste groups within farmers society, such as Carpenters, Leatherworkers, and Shepherds.

The Kadar, Birhor, Chenchu, Vedda and Nayadi South Indian hunter-gatherer groups have historically been considered as having lived in relative isolation from farming communities. Fox argues that these groups are in fact intimately connected to Hindu culture and society and have traded forest products with neighbouring agriculturists for many centuries. "Hunting and gathering in the Indian context is not an economic response to a totally undifferentiated environment. Rather it is a highly specialized and selective orientation to the natural situation where forest goods are collected and valued primarily for external barter or trade, and where necessary subsistence or ceremonial items.... are only obtainable in this way" (Fox 1969:141).

All these groups exchange a wide range of forest products for farmer products, or have exchanged these products in the past. Forest products traded include ivory, honey, beeswax, cardamom, rope fibre, fruits, flowers (for liquor distillation), resin, bark, and medicinal plants, meat and skins. Goods received by hunter-gatherers from farmers include iron, knives, pottery, ornaments, arrow and axe heads, clothing, rice, chillies, salt, oil, opium and even livestock, which are used in sacrificial rituals. In addition, hunter-gatherers provide certain services to farmers, such as acting as guides for these people in the dense forests they exploit. Ceremonial friendships have been established between members of some hunter-gatherer groups and members of farming communities, possibly as a direct result of these trading relationships, and the influence of this contact on their customs, beliefs and ritual practices has been profound (Fox 1969).

The development of "commercial" hunter-gathering has had a marked effect on the social organisation of these hunter-gatherer societies. Larger cooperative groups have fragmented and been replaced as the primary economic units by highly competitive nuclear family groups or individuals, who try to maximise the amount of forest foods collected for the purposes of trade. The ethos of reciprocity has come to be replaced by one of competition, and concepts of private ownership of subsistence and trade commodities have become highly developed compared to those existing in groups which hunt and gather for subsistence rather than trade. Fox also suggests that the lack of large kin groupings such as clans, and the consequent absence of clan elders, councils and elaborate ceremonial which strengthens group solidarity, results from the emphasis

placed on trade, as does the prevalent pattern of highly migratory individuals and constant flux in the population of a locality. Many present-day hunter-gatherer societies characterised by extensive relations of reciprocity and a relative absence of competition, however, do not have highly developed political structures or elaborate ritual practices and are highly migratory. It is probably incorrect, therefore, to ascribe these particular features to a breakdown in reciprocity and general social fragmentation consequent upon the emphasis placed on trade, as Fox suggests is the case.

The value of Fox's analysis of these five south Indian hunter-gatherer groups lies in his drawing our attention to the degree of contact between hunter-gatherer and farmer communities, the establishment of extensive trading networks between these groups and the tendency for relations based on competition between nuclear family units to develop as a result of trade. Hunter-gatherer groups not as extensively involved in trade with farmers do not exhibit these characteristics to anything like as great an extent. The profound effects of interaction on these South Indian hunter-gatherer groups are evident in the gearing of their social organisations towards trade with farming communities. For this reason, if one wishes to understand the present forms of social organization apparent in a hunter-gatherer community, Fox argues, one must know "the social terrain - who are its neighbors, what is the level of social complexity, and what is the connexion or interaction between the groups" (Fox 1969:140-141).

#### 4 THE MALAPANTARAM

The Malapantaram, or Hill Pandaram, live in the forested hills south of Lake Periyar in South India. In earlier times they lived entirely by hunting and gathering, but today some of them have mixed economies. Most of these people are nomadic gatherers of forest produce and forage both for subsistence and for trade. They live in dispersed groups, usually consisting of two or three couples and their children, and their camps, which are not permanent settlements, consist of one to six small leaf shelters, each typically housing a single family (Morris 1977, 1982).

Trade between hunter-gatherers and farmers in the area has occurred since at least 200 B.C. With the expansion of the Tamil kingdoms and semi-independent chieftancies, control over the forest came to be exerted by farming communities. Royalties were levied on forest products such as cardamom, bamboo, ivory, honey and wax. Hunting expeditions into the hills were organised on a regular basis and it is likely that hunter-gatherers inhabiting the forests would have acted as guides and trackers on these occasions (Morris 1977:228). Ethnographic reports of hunter-gatherer communities

dating from more than a century ago detail extensive trade between hill hunter-gatherers and plainspeople, and trading contacts were established with plains merchants, who acted as middlemen in this trade. Relationships between hunter-gatherer and merchant were characterised by a system of patronage. Hunter-gatherers were considered to belong, or owe allegiance, to specific states or petty chieftains, who in turn permitted certain merchants to buy forest produce from hill hunter-gatherers. These forest products constituted an important source of revenue for the various kingdoms. Morris (1977:229) concludes that "the gathering of forest produce for barter has always been a crucial factor in the cultural setting of South Indian hunter-gatherers and.....it is doubtful if they can ever be regarded as being culturally isolated from wider Hindu society - in historical times at least".

Morris suggests that the extensive involvement of the Hill Pandaram in trade networks has fundamentally changed their social organisation, in the same way that the social organisation of the Mundurucu and Algonkian American Indians was changed by their involvement in market economies, as detailed by Murphy and Steward (1956). "The causal link that these scholars postulate between such trading contacts and the emergence of a social pattern in which the individual family is the primary unit is equally apposite for South Indian hunter-gatherers" (Morris 1977:239). As the hunting and gathering economy, centred on the subsistence needs of the Hill Pandaram, changed to an economy based on barter, the individual family emerged as the primary economic unit, greatly altering the social structures that existed before contact (Morris 1982).

It seems that the development of competitive nuclear family units as the primary units of economic and social organization was a general response to involvement in wider economic systems amongst most South Indian hunter-gatherer communities. It is possible, as will be discussed later, that such a development was one of the responses of some south-eastern San to the development of similar trading relationships between these groups and southern Nguni and Sotho communities.

## 5 THE OKIEK

The Okiek subsist by hunting and gathering as well as by mixed farming. They inhabit the Mau escarpment, forested highlands in central Kenya, and are one of about twenty-five groups that still practise hunting and gathering in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. These groups are collectively known as *Dorobo* - a Maasai term referring to people who have no, or very few, cattle. The term applies both to Maasai who have temporarily lost their cattle and must hunt and gather until they can once again acquire

cattle and to groups such as the Okiek who hunt and gather regularly for subsistence and trade (Blackburn 1974, 1982).

The various Dorobo hunter-gatherer groups, including the Okiek, speak a wide variety of languages, but they usually speak the language of their farmer or pastoralist neighbours as a first language. There is no one language spoken by, and peculiar to, the Dorobo, but there are some languages spoken by Okiek groups which are unintelligible to Maasai and Kalenjin speakers, and which may be related to languages spoken by hunter-gatherers before the arrival of pastoralists or agriculturists (Blackburn 1974; van Zwanenberg and Press 1976). Many Okiek speak a Kalenjin dialect identical to that of pastoralists occupying the plain below the Mau escarpment, and all share some distinctive and recognisable characteristics of culture, social organisation and technology (Blackburn 1982). However, there are also variations in the languages of the thirty-three Okiek groups. Some Okiek groups have no knowledge of each other, and these groups generally speak different languages. Thus, while the Okiek groups are characterised by certain cultural traits and by a particular level of technological advancement, there are also many differences in language and culture between the groups.

The Mau escarpment, where the Okiek hunt and gather, has a number of ecological zones at different altitudes which support different plant and animal species. This allows the Okiek to exploit a wide range of forest resources at different times of the year. While the forest supports large amounts of game and is an abundant source of honey, there are few fruits, nuts and tubers available. As a result, they trade extensively with the Maasai to supplement their dietary needs. According to Blackburn (1982:245) they have "mutually complementary needs which can be satisfied only by material trade..." and both groups produce or collect goods in excess of their needs specifically for barter. Honey is the forest product most desired by Maasai who drink it in the form of honey wine or mixed with milk to form a drink integral to certain of their rituals. A wide range of other primary and crafted goods derived from the forest, including buffalo hides, wild animal tails, monkey and hyrax skins, herbal medicines, sword sheaths, bows and arrows and skin necklaces are traded with the Maasai, or were traded in the past (Blackburn 1982; Kratz 1980). In return for these products the Okiek receive maize meal. While occupying the forest, the Okiek depend largely on game, supplemented by honey, for their subsistence, but at their base camp on the edge of the forest they mainly eat cultivated foods, either produced by themselves or acquired through trade from adjacent farmers. Okiek maintain that even in the past they traded for considerable amounts of maize meal as well as domesticated animal meat and milk (Blackburn 1982). They also receive cattle and other domestic stock from farmers for sacrificial rituals.

Trade between Okiek and Maasai is largely conducted between trading partners. Friendships are cultivated between Okiek and Maasai males, usually of the same age-set and often of the same clan, for the specific purpose of exchanging goods and services and trading partners often have a close personal relationship.

The effects of this trade on Okiek social organisation have been considerable and there are many similarities in Okiek and Maasai culture which reflect the close relationship between these people. Similarities in the languages spoken by the two groups have already been mentioned, and Okiek also possess many of the same social institutions as neighbouring pastoralists and farmers - such as the clan system and the age-set system with its attendant ceremonies. Their initiation ceremonies are very similar and those Okiek and Maasai men who belong to the same clan refer to each other as "brother". Okiek circumcise Maasai boys and have done so for as long as they can remember. According to Blackburn (1982:299) it is quite possible that the Okiek practised this rite before the Maasai, as some Okiek claim to be the case. It is also possible that the Okiek perform this task for the Maasai because of the supernatural powers attributed to them by these people. The Okiek are considered to be mysterious beings with special magical powers with respect to medicines, rainmaking and sorcery (Blackburn 1974, 1982), and this may have made them suitable for the role of ritual functionaries in Maasai ceremonies. Further close cultural links between the Okiek and Maasai are suggested by the fact that the various Okiek lineages have Maasai clan names and the Okiek age-set system parallels that of the Maasai (Blackburn 1982). Most Okiek songs, including the Elephant Song, which is regarded as *the* Okiek song, are sung in the Maasai language (Kratz 1980:362).

There is some debate as to whether the Okiek and other Dorobo are descendants of aboriginal hunter-gatherer groups in Kenya and Tanzania or whether they are descendants of pastoralists and agriculturists who adopted a hunting and gathering lifeway for subsistence or trade (Blackburn 1974, 1982; Berntsen 1976; van Zwanenberg and Press 1976; Kratz 1980; Woodburn 1988). The multiple similarities between the Okiek and the neighbouring Maasai suggest, however, that symbiotic interaction has occurred between them for a very long time, and that, if the Okiek were ethnically differentiated from the Maasai in the past, they have, to a large extent, taken on the "social clothing" of the encapsulating and dominant group with whom they interact (van Zwanenberg and Press 1976:14). In this respect the Okiek form part of a wider precapitalist mode of production of East Africa connected through trade to a variety of groups, but particularly the Maasai, whose influence is clearly apparent in their social organisation and culture today (van Zwanenberg and Press 1976).

## 6 THE MBUTI

The Mbuti are nomadic hunter-gatherers inhabiting the Ituri tropical rain forest in Zaire. They live in small, temporary camps, the membership of which is highly flexible and constantly changing. Although they identify with the forest, and are also associated with the forest by neighbouring Negro farmers, they have strong ties with farming communities (Turnbull 1965, 1983; Hart and Hart 1986; Waehle 1986; Bailey 1991). In many respects the cultures of the Mbuti and these communities are closely enmeshed. This has occurred to a large extent as a result of the development of trading relationships between the two groups.

It seems probable that farming communities penetrated the western equatorial forest fringe as early as c. 2500 B.C. and it is possible that trading relationships between hunter-gatherers and farmers were established at least 2,000 years ago (Bahuchet and Guillaume 1982). Although long term exchange relationships have not been accompanied by technological assimilation, and the two groups have remained distinct in certain respects, Bahuchet and Guillaume note that it is highly likely that centuries of proximity and contact have greatly influenced both groups in a variety of ways. Hunter-gatherer and farmer, moreover, have been, and to a large extent remain, dependent on each other for their continued survival in their present habitats.

Hart and Hart (1986), Headland and Reid (1987) and Bailey (1991) argue that hunter-gatherers could not have lived in the equatorial forest without trading with farmers for calorie-rich domesticated foods. Although primary forest products are generally rich in protein, the forest lacks calorically important fruits and seeds for five months of the year. This caloric shortfall in the Mbuti diet needs to be made up by trading forest products and services with farmers in return for carbohydrate. The need for hunter-gatherers inhabiting rain forests to supplement their hunted and gathered foods with domesticated carbohydrates is supported by the studies of Speth and Spielmann (1983) and Spielmann (1986). These authors suggest that the development of "mutualistic" relationships between hunter-gatherers and farmers, which allow hunter-gatherers to obtain carbohydrate, is essential for the hunter-gatherers' survival. By clearing primary forests, farmers have also increased the number of edible calorie-rich wild plant species available to the Mbuti, since these species are considerably more abundant in secondary than in primary forests. As Hart and Hart (1986:32) have remarked, "shifting cultivators brought not only agricultural foods but also new environments". It may thus well have been the case that agricultural foods supplied by farmers as well as the

development of secondary forests, which supported wild plant foods, were necessary for the survival of the Mbuti in the Ituri forest, and Bailey (1991:112) suggests that it is doubtful whether the Efe presently living in the Ituri forest could survive independently of their horticultural neighbours.

A wide variety of foods is exchanged between Mbuti and villagers. The Mbuti exchange meat, fish, mushrooms, honey, wild yams and nuts for agricultural foods such as cassava, plantains, cultivated yams and sweet potatoes (Hart and Hart 1986:31; Waehle 1986:385). Gathered plant foods form only a small proportion of the total calories in the diet of Mbuti, and over 60% of the caloric intake of some Mbuti groups is derived from agricultural foods (Hart and Hart 1986), while Bailey (1991:112) remarks that it is unlikely that there are any Mbuti in the Ituri who derive less than 25 % of their calories from cultivated foods. Occasionally Mbuti will give farmer products, such as eggs or vegetables from minor gardens, to villagers, who sometimes hunt and may provide Mbuti with meat and fish. Such exchanges are the exception rather than the rule, however, and it is the Mbuti who are regarded as the true "forest experts" (Waehle 1986). In addition to foods, a large number of other goods are also exchanged. The Mbuti barter building materials, plant fibres used to make mats and baskets, poisoned arrows and medicinal plants for iron, aluminum pots, fish hooks, knives, spears, arrow-heads, tobacco, hemp and salt - the last three items being particularly desired by the Mbuti (Waehle 1986).

Probably the most important commodity the Mbuti have to offer the villagers is their labour, and this is a major factor in the formation of symbiotic relationships between them. The villagers are heavily dependent on the Mbuti for the provision of labour at particular stages of the year. Their need for Mbuti labour and the Mbuti's dependence on domesticated carbohydrates appear to have ensured that when villages moved it involved a "shifting from side to side, always within the peripheral boundaries of the corresponding Mbuti hunting territory, so that each village retained constant ties, such as they were, with the amorphous hunting band within that territory" (Turnbull 1983:60).

Exchange relationships between Mbuti and villagers have social, religious and political dimensions. Mbuti men generally exchange their forest products with specific members of the village communities with whom they have a ritually-sanctioned relationship. These exchange partners, known as *karé* (brothers of the knife) are village men who have been circumcised with them and with whom they have shared the *nkumbi* initiation ceremony (Turnbull 1965, 1983). During this ceremony, a joint initiation of

Mbuti and villager youths, a Mbuti boy and a village boy are circumcised with the same knife so that their blood mixes and a *karé* bond is created between them. From this time they are ritually linked for the rest of their lives and will trade with each other and help each other when requested to do so by their *karé* partner. The *nkumbi* is essentially a villager ritual and functions to bind the Mbuti to the villagers, placing them under the control of their ancestors. The participation of Mbuti in the ritual also ensures that the initiation camp is protected against malevolent forest spirits which might attack the villager initiates (Turnbull 1965, 1983). It allows villagers to call upon their *karé* partners when they require their labour or forest products, and in return the Mbuti are assured of a regular supply of a variety of products, including cultivated foods, from the villagers.

While maintaining close economic and ritual ties with farming communities, the Mbuti nevertheless retain a separate or "parallel" cultural identity which is closely associated with their hunter-gatherer lifeway and the forest, and which is in direct contrast to that of the villagers' culture. Turnbull (1965, 1983) suggests that this is the real Mbuti culture and that their participation in villager cultural life is an opportunistic strategy which allows them to deal with demands placed upon them by the farmers. It is more than likely, however, in view of the dietary studies cited above and in view of the long-standing and extensive economic and ritual interaction that characterises their relationship, that Mbuti culture has been greatly affected by the society of the villagers.

## 7 THE EASTERN HADZA

The eastern Hadza are nomadic hunter-gatherers living near Lake Eyasi, a salt, rift valley lake just south of the equator in Tanzania. Like the southern and western Hadza they speak a click language as their first language, but they have had less contact with farming communities than the southern and western groups, and until 1960 subsisted almost entirely by hunting and gathering in the thickets and hills bordering the savannah of Tanzania (Woodburn 1968a, 1968b).

The Hadza are encapsulated by a variety of agriculturist and pastoralist communities, all of whom they could contact and trade with if they chose to do so (Woodburn 1988). These groups have steadily encroached upon Hadza territory for at least the last fifty years, killing most of the game and destroying much of the indigenous vegetation in the areas they have occupied. Those areas that remain unoccupied by non-Hadza, however, support sufficient natural resources for the eastern Hadza to be able to subsist almost entirely by hunting and gathering. They have thus, according to

Woodburn (1988), continued to retain an immediate-return economic system, and are little concerned with accumulating a surplus of hunted and gathered foods for the purposes of trading these goods with neighbouring agriculturists and pastoralists.

Trade, nevertheless, does occur between Hadza and others. Hadza exchange honey, meat, zebra tails and fat, wildebeest hides, herbal medicines and their labour in return for a wide variety of goods, including metal implements and flour (Woodburn 1968b; 1988). Despite the existence of this trade, the Hadza seldom work for non-Hadza, they are not commissioned to hunt for meat or collect honey and other bush products and they take trouble to avoid commitments to outsiders and other Hadza (Woodburn 1988). They have not accumulated cattle and their hunting technology has remained very rudimentary and unsuited to the large-scale exploitation of game for trade (Woodburn 1968a, 1988). The Hadza have traditionally been reluctant to enter into and maintain stable trading relationships with their neighbours and historically made no effort to hunt elephants and trade in ivory, despite the considerable rewards this would have brought them. Woodburn (1988:52) thus concludes that "there is nothing to suggest that Hadza enter or ever entered into patron-client relationships with their neighbors though some individual Hadza do establish friendly ties with their neighbors. The evidence strongly suggest that there is or was in the known past no significant pressure on them to exploit the area for the benefit of outsiders or, if there ever was such pressure, that they resisted it".

While Woodburn suggests that the eastern Hadza are almost completely independent of neighboring farmers, historical reports which he cites seem to indicate a relatively close relationship between the groups. The geographer, Erich Obst, who met the eastern Hadza in 1911, noted that after a long period of warfare between these Hadza and invading agriculturists and pastoralists the Hadza settled down to a peaceful relationship with these people, who included Isanzu farmers. "Silent trading led to exchange of the natural and cultural riches of the two peoples (Hadza and Isanzu) and to.... peaceful invasion by the Waissansu(Isanzu)" (Obst, cited in Woodburn 1988:46, my bracketed additions).

Many Hadza are related to the Isanzu as a result of intermarriage between the two groups (Woodburn 1988:39). It is difficult to imagine that such marital ties have not led to a significant degree of symbiotic interaction between them. Intermarriage between Hadza and Isanzu, the documented ties between individual Hadza and non-Hadza and the wide variety of goods exchanged between the Hadza and others suggests that the Hadza participated in larger economic and social networks than that represented by hunter-

gatherer band society. A close look at the historical and archival record, such as has recently been undertaken in Botswana and Namibia (Gordon 1984; Wilmsen 1989; Wilmsen and Denbow 1990) may reveal a greater degree of symbiotic interaction between the Hadza and others than is presently apparent.

## SUMMARY

This general survey of certain non-San hunter-gatherer groups and the farming or pastoralist communities that wholly or partially encapsulate them reveals a number of patterns which characterise relationships between all or most of the hunter-gatherer groups surveyed and their farmer or pastoralist neighbors. These patterns may provide clues to relationships that developed between the south-eastern San and the southern Nguni and Sotho.

All the hunter-gatherer groups discussed above trade more or less intensively with their agriculturist and pastoralist neighbours. In many cases they can be regarded as "professional primitives" or "secondary hunter-gatherers", hunting and gathering in order to trade rather than to subsist. Hunter-gatherers such as these, it has been suggested, may be the descendants of aboriginal hunter-gatherer communities who have realised the advantages offered by trade in forest products over a hunting and gathering lifeway orientated towards subsistence, and who have consequently specialised in the collection and trade of such products. Or they may be groups descended from splinter farmer communities who, through force of circumstance or through choice, came to exploit a particular ecological niche for the purposes of trading with cultivators and pastoralists. They often resemble the neighbouring farmer or pastoralist communities with whom they trade more closely than they resemble other hunter-gatherer communities, who are identified by the same name, but who interact with different agriculturist peoples and share the customs and languages of these groups.

Other hunter-gatherer groups consume much of the food that they acquire by hunting and gathering, but are nevertheless heavily involved in trading and other relationships with agropastoralists. In particular, they trade for foods such as domesticated carbohydrates which nutritionally complement foods obtained by hunting and gathering. The lack of carbohydrates in the primary rain forest that these hunter-gatherer groups inhabit appears to have necessitated their supplementing a diet comprised almost exclusively of protein-rich foods with essential calorie-rich foods. Hunter-gatherers do not only trade to balance their diet, however. In addition to exchanging forest foods and labour for cultivated foods, they also acquire other products possessed

by farmers, including addictive substances such as tobacco, hemp and opium. While they could theoretically dispense with these substances, they have, in effect, become dependent upon them. The farming communities with whom they trade have similarly become dependent on the goods and, particularly, labour that the hunter-gatherers provide, so that hunter-gatherer and farmer co-exist in a manner characterised by what Petersen (1978) has termed " tandem specialization". Particular needs of both hunter-gatherer and farmer are met by each other, with the result that the different lifeways of hunter-gatherers and farmers complement each other to the mutual benefit of both groups.

There are generally also social, political and religious dimensions to these trading relationships. Trading partners may come from the same age-set and may be initiated together so that the relationship rather than being purely economically based comes to involve close personal and ritual ties. The establishment of these ties has had the effect, in many cases, of drawing hunter-gatherers into the social life of farming communities, whose ritual practices, religious beliefs and other aspects of social life they have come to share. In some cases, perhaps that of the Mbuti, this may be a strategy devised in order to satisfy the desire of villagers to incorporate and control "their" hunter-gatherers, and a largely different set of customs and beliefs may be adhered to when the hunter-gatherer community moves away from the direct influence of villager society. In other cases, hunter-gatherer communities have adopted the culture and political organisation of their farmer neighbours almost entirely so that, aside from their different modes of subsistence and levels of technological advancement, there is very little which differentiates them from these people. In still other cases, a hybrid form of hunter-gatherer social organisation has resulted from extensive contact, so that hunter-gatherer groups resemble neither communities who hunt and gather almost exclusively for subsistence nor the farming communities with whom they trade.

Common to all these analyses of interaction between non-San hunter-gatherers and their agropastoralist neighbours are the issues of the extent to which hunter-gatherer groups are economically, socially and culturally integrated with farming communities and the degree of congruence which exists between ethnic grouping and mode of production. Analyses of interaction between the south-western Cape San and the Khoi as well as between Kalahari San groups and agropastoralists, which have continued and developed this debate, are surveyed in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE

### SOUTH-WESTERN CAPE AND KALAHARI SAN AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS - THE "REVISIONIST DEBATE"

#### 1 THE SOUTH-WESTERN CAPE SAN AND THE KHOI

Aboriginal hunter-gatherer communities of the south western Cape are known to have been in contact with Khoi pastoralists for many centuries - from approximately 1800 B.P.. There is, however, considerable debate as to the nature of this contact and its effects on San society.

Some authors have suggested that many, perhaps most, San communities of the south-western Cape maintained a lifeway largely independent of the Khoi, continuing to subsist almost exclusively by hunting and gathering until at least the 17th century in those areas least exploited by pastoralists. Such hunter-gatherer communities, it is argued, maintained certain social characteristics such as an ethos of reciprocity and egalitarianism as well as certain rituals and practices such as trance dancing and painting. The retention of these social traits, it is suggested, differentiated them quite clearly from Khoi pastoralists, and this distinction is manifested in the archaeological record (Parkington 1984; Parkington et al 1986; Smith 1986, 1990a, 1990b). Other authors have stressed the permeability of social boundaries between San hunter-gatherers and the Khoi. They suggest that San and Khoi individuals and groups oscillated between different modes of subsistence with a resultant "fudging" of economic and cultural distinctions between these groups (Schrire 1980, 1984; Elphick 1985).

Parkington (1984) and Parkington et al (1986) have constructed a model for prehistoric contact between San hunter-gatherer communities and immigrant Khoi pastoralists who arrived in the south-western Cape during the first millennium A.D.. They point out that analysis of archaeological sites in this area reveals a marked change in settlement patterns and artefact assemblages of hunter-gatherer sites coincident with pastoralist incursions into the area. Hunter-gatherer sites occupied largely or exclusively before 1800 B.P. consist either of very large shell middens adjacent to highly productive intertidal platforms or of deflation hollows some kilometres further inland on the sandveld plain. The megamiddens are probably areas where gathered foods were processed, rather than permanent dwelling sites which are represented by camps sited in deflation hollows. The latter sites are characterised by small numbers of ceramics and

large tool assemblages with a high proportion of scrapers and backed pieces and very few adzes.

Post-pottery sites which display occupation from c. 1800 B.P. onwards generally occur further inland in rock shelters and caves situated in the broken country of the hills above the sandy plain. They are relatively far from permanent water and the vegetation in these areas is less capable of supporting larger bovines, such as eland or cattle, than vegetation on the plain. Tool assemblages are large and characterised by some scrapers and a relative abundance of adzes. The presence of the latter artefacts, which are largely used for the sharpening of wooden implements such as digging sticks, suggests an increased reliance on gathering as a result of pastoralist incursion and a consequent decrease in larger game. Ceramics are almost always found on the inland sites, and rock paintings are invariably juxtaposed with, or situated in, these sites (Parkington et al 1986).

On the basis of the patterning of archaeological sites and their associated assemblages as well as an examination of the historical record, Parkington (1984) argues that south-western Cape San hunter-gatherer communities, although undergoing some changes as a result of contact with pastoralists, remained culturally and economically distinct from these communities. This distinction remained until the effects of European colonisation came to be strongly felt by these groups, culminating in widespread disruption of indigenous peoples in the 18th century. San hunter-gatherers, referred to as *Soaqua* in the historical records, occupied more mountainous areas where they lived partly by hunting and gathering and partly by raiding the cattle of the Khoi. These cattle were generally eaten rather than kept as livestock. *Soaqua* communities differed from those groups termed "Bushmen" who, Parkington (1984) suggests, were people with a lifeway superficially similar to that of the *Soaqua*, but who were composed of former hunter-gatherers and pastoralists. As a result of increased social disruption caused by the expansion of the Dutch, these "Bushmen" formed themselves into robber bands and subsisted almost entirely by stealing livestock.

This model is supported by other authors (Smith 1986, 1990a, 1990b; Eidelberg 1986) who argue that the social relations of hunter-gatherer bands are so different from those of herders that significant barriers would have existed to the adoption of pastoralism by hunter-gatherers and to their incorporation into herder society. Smith suggests that the ethos of herding with its future orientation, social and symbolic relations with domestic stock, political alliances for controls of water and pasture as well as private and corporate ownership of stock has little ideological relevance in hunter-

gatherer society. The sharing ethos of hunter-gatherer bands, their tendency to consume rather than store and the difficulties involved in integrating an ideology associated with cattle into the hunter-gatherer social organizations and belief system all suggest, Smith argues, that hunter-gatherers seldom adopted a pastoralist mode of subsistence: "the evidence suggests we are dealing with two quite different sets of relations, and although they can never be absolute they create significant barriers which prevent individuals or groups of hunter/foragers from becoming herders" (Smith 1990a:67).

While Soaqua communities might have retained an essentially hunter-gatherer lifeway that resembled that of pre-contact hunter-gatherer groups in many ways, Parkington et al (1986) argue that their social organisation and certain aspects of their belief system are likely to have been affected by stresses resultant upon the advent of herders. These stresses would have been caused, at least in part, by the decrease in the numbers of larger game required to generate and maintain exchange relations between Soaqua groups. "Limpets, tortoises, even steenbok cannot be used as mechanisms for maintaining social relations of reciprocity and obligation between camps and thus emphasizing social cohesion and well being" (Parkington et al 1986:326).

Invoking the theories of Laughlin and d'Aquila, as well as the work of Guenther(1976) amongst the ~~NWACO~~ they suggest that, faced with pastoralist incursion into their territory, the south-western Cape San responded by intensifying their ritual practices as a means of reinforcing group identity, releasing frustrations and bolstering a sagging self-image. The trance dance became the focus of this revitalisation, and the greater complexity and detail apparent in rock art executed in post-pastoralist rock shelters reflects the increased emphasis placed on trance performance and its expression in the art. Rock art is so closely linked to the phenomenon of pastoralist disruption, they argue, that "it is tempting to conclude that, prior to the appearance of herding, painting did not form an important part of ritual activity" (Parkington et al 1986:327).

Schrire (1980, 1984) and Elphick (1985) have proposed a model for interaction between Khoi and San which differs considerably from those outlined above. While acknowledging that there would probably have been considerable differences between Khoi and San societies in the initial stages of contact, they argue with Marks (1972) that this distinction had become so blurred with time as a result of the mutual influence of the Khoi and San upon their respective economic and social organizations that the two groups were virtually indistinguishable by the historic period. Many San acquired cattle and became herders, adopting the language and customs of the Khoi, and many Khoi who had lost their cattle resorted to hunting and gathering. The tendency to classify Khoi

and San as two distinct ethnic groups, each with its own language(s), culture, economy and racial type can therefore be considered, according to Elphick (1985:25), "one of those time-honoured pairing mechanisms... by which historians automatically organise, but also distort, the complexities of historical reality".

The wide range of subsistence modes documented for communities known as Soaqua, San, Ubiqua, Bosjesmans etc. in the historical record, varying from hunting and gathering to herding, with many intermediate modes, suggest to Schrire and Elphick that San (and Khoi) individuals and groups may have changed their subsistence bases moving from one mode of subsistence to another and back again. Such moves would depend on the "interplay of a number of factors, including seasonal and periodic fluctuations in climate, water resources, pasturage and wild foodstuffs" (Schrire 1980:23). These fluctuations in subsistence mode, they suggest, would have occurred both before and after the arrival of Dutch colonists at the Cape.

The move from herding to hunting is termed the "downward" phase of the economic cycle, while that from hunting to herding represent the "upward" phase (Elphick 1985). The effect of these changes in modes of subsistence was to increase contact between Khoi and San societies so that a process of physical and cultural hybridisation took place which came to obscure many of the distinctions between certain Khoi and San groups. The general trend was for Khoi culture and language to replace that of the weaker hunter-gatherer society (Elphick 1985). Schrire (1980) has remarked, moreover, that if the boundaries between herder and hunter-gatherer societies have always been relatively permeable, and if herders were forced to hunt and gather at certain times, this would have to be taken into account in analyses of archaeological sites. Assemblages at these sites, particularly the bones of cattle and sheep, may indicate occupation of these sites by herders in a "downward" phase of the ecological cycle who were living by hunting and gathering - or perhaps herders who camped on these sites during the course of hunting and gathering expeditions.

This debate is relevant to analyses of interaction between the south eastern San and the southern Nguni and southern Sotho. While Khoi society differed from that of black agriculturists in many respects, there were also sufficient similarities in their economies and cultures to permit a considerable degree of interaction between Khoi, such as the Gonaqua, and black farmers, such as the Xhosa (Harinck 1969). We can expect *some* of the relationships that developed between San hunter-gatherers and Khoi pastoralists to have characterised interaction between the south eastern San and black farmers. Both black farmers and Khoi would have been able to offer the San similar

resources, in some cases, and some goods and services offered by the San to Khoi are likely to have been similarly desired by black farmers. The formation of relationships based on exchange of goods and services would have affected all communities involved in this trade and the potential effects of this interaction will be explored in greater detail in my discussion of relations between the south-eastern San and southern Nguni and Sotho communities.

## 2 KALAHARI SAN AND BLACK FARMING COMMUNITIES

A similar debate concerning the intensity, nature and effects of interaction between San hunter-gatherers and others has characterised recent "revisionist" studies of hunter-gatherer communities of the Kalahari. As with the debate concerning the forms of interaction believed to have occurred between Khoi and San, the issues concern concepts of ethnicity and the cultures traditionally associated with ethnic groups.

Recent analyses of the history of contact between Kalahari hunter-gatherers and black farmers have stressed the length of time over which such contact has occurred as well as the intensity of this contact and its effects on hunter-gatherer society. (Schrire 1980, 1984; Denbow 1984, 1986; Gordon 1984, 1986; Wilmsen 1989; Wilmsen and Denbow 1990). These analyses have challenged assumptions made by some ethnographers that the Kalahari San, as a result of their geographical isolation in marginal environments unsuited for farming, largely escaped the effects of contact with Bantu speakers and were thus able to retain a culture and economy almost unchanged from that possessed by their L.S.A. forebears.

Deetz (1968:283) was an early critic of the use of ethnographic studies of modern hunter-gatherer societies to model the economies and cultures of L.S.A. populations, and Schrire (1980) has suggested that, in view of the high degree of overlap in the economic life of indigenous people of the Kalahari revealed by historical records, we can assume that Kalahari San switched between hunting and gathering and herding many times in the past. "In this they resemble not Palaeolithic or Neolithic populations but many other Khoisan groups in the wider African context" (Schrire 1980:26). It is argued that evidence from Early Iron Age

sites suggests that farmers have occupied parts of the Kalahari for at least one thousand years, and perhaps for a considerably longer period of time (Denbow 1984, 1986; Wilmsen 1989; Wilmsen and Denbow 1990). The presence of items such as marine shells and iron pendants, of a design similar to pendants found in Zaire, at the Early Iron Age site of Divuyu near the Tsodilo Hills are seen as evidence that "during the first

centuries A.D., this northern margin of the Kalahari was already part of a wider sphere of production and exchange extending throughout a large portion of the Angolan and Kongo river systems" (Wilmsen 1989:71). Ngoma, an Iron Age site, also close to the Tsodilo Hills and dating from the 9th century A.D. contains cane-glass beads and marine mollusc shells, and Wilmsen and Denbow (1990) conclude that Ngoma was an important local centre in intracontinental trade networks by the 9th century.

Wilmsen (1989) and Wilmsen and Denbow (1990) argue that incoming farming communities brought with them, or developed, hegemonic systems that were quite different from the social organisation characteristic of the aboriginal hunter-gatherer communities that they first encountered approximately 2,000 years B.P.. The development of these systems and the accompanying social stratification of the inhabitants of early Iron Age settlements, it is suggested, proceeded rapidly, and a hierarchy of settlements can be identified on these sites. This hierarchy is manifested in terms of site size, location, length of occupation, proportion of exotic trade items and relative numbers of domestic stock. It is argued that hunter-gatherers in the eastern Kalahari were absorbed into regional economic networks and the hierarchically organised social systems of farmers, with the result that "pastorforagers", and perhaps pure foragers, came to form a subordinate class within the larger society into which they were incorporated. "It appears that by the end of the first millennium A.D. eastern Kalahari communities were differentiated socially and economically in a manner similar to that of historically known and contemporary social formations found in that same region" (Wilmsen 1989:75). In the western Kalahari, in contrast, although full farmer economies with ironworking and extensive trading networks were introduced at the same time as in the east, the dominance of Bantu-speakers was not established until the 19th century, and, consequently, forager and herder polities were less hegemonically structured in this area than the east (Wilmsen 1989).

Denbow (1984) has suggested that interaction between hunter-gatherers and herders can be detected in the deposits of eastern Kalahari Iron Age sites. Of three hundred Early Iron Age sites located on the eastern fringes the Kalahari, two contained L.S.A. lithics and some sites contained springbok bones. On the basis of this evidence and the presence of small numbers of L.S.A. artefacts on seven of the eight Iron Age sites excavated in the northern Kalahari, as well as the depiction of cattle in the rock art at Tsodilo Hills, it is concluded that "foragers and producers have been enmeshed in networks of interactions and exchange for 1,000 years longer than was previously suspected" (Denbow 1984:178).

It is clear from the fact that cattle, sheep and certain exotic goods are associated with many L.S.A. Kalahari assemblages, including those at Nxai Nxai only forty-five kilometres from Dobe, that farming communities have occupied the Kalahari for a long period of time. The archaeological evidence for interaction between hunter-gatherers and other groups is limited, however, and the presence of L.S.A. artefacts on Iron Age sites may be explained in a number of different ways (Parkington and Hall 1987). This evidence needs to be supplemented with further archaeological data before we can confidently draw conclusions as to the extent and nature of the relationships that may have developed between Kalahari hunter-gatherers and early food producers. This is acknowledged by Wilmsen (1989:71) who, while suggesting that interaction occurred at an early stage, remarks that the dimensions of these transfers and their effects on local populations are not yet known.

The more recent history of the Kalahari and its peoples contains a wealth of detail concerning the forms of relations that characterised interaction between hunter-gatherers and farmers. While it is not possible to deal with all the studies in detail here, some of the more important characteristics of interaction that have been recorded, as well as the debates surrounding the forms of interaction that may have occurred are summarised below.

Gordon (1984), Wilmsen (1989) and Wilmsen and Denbow (1990), surveying the ethnographic and archival material related to Kalahari San communities of the 19th and 20th centuries, have suggested that San communities, including many groups that possessed cattle, were actively involved in trading relationships with black farmers and European hunters and traders. Trade routes between these two groups and others were extensive and well established in the Kalahari by the 19th century (Wilmsen 1989:115). The involvement of the San in trading networks, many of which supplied European markets, acted as a source of empowerment for them, according to Gordon (1984), who suggests that: " The old notion of these people as passive victims of European invasion and Bantu expansion is changing. Bushmen emerge as one of many indigenous peoples operating in a mobile landscape and forming and shifting their political and economic alliances to take advantage of circumstances as they perceived them" (Gordon 1984:196).

Even before the major influence of European markets began to be felt in the Kalahari, c.1860, the San were supplying many products to Bantu-speakers along well-established trade routes. Copper, ivory, ostrich feathers, wild animal skins, ostrich eggshell beads and salt were all traded with black farmers who either kept them for their own use or traded them to Europeans at the Cape, and perhaps Mocambique (Wilmsen

1989:84, 116-120; Gordon 1984). According to the traditions of the Heikum San, such trade occurred from the period of first contact (Gordon 1984:212). Hunting appears to have been conducted on a scale which suggests that the San were generating a surplus of meat specifically for the purposes of trading with Bantu-speakers and Europeans. Large-scale game drives are evidenced by the existence of very large game traps, which caused Passarge, the German geographer, to speculate that the political organisation and institutions of leadership of these people were highly developed (Wilmsen and Denbow 1990:496).

The San did not only trade on a large scale in animal products before the influence of Europeans on trading networks came to be strongly felt, but also in copper and labour. Copper was mined by San under the protection of the Ondonga king at what is now Great Otavi, north of the Etosha Pan. They were said to have discovered the copper mines at Tsumeb and were the owners of bellows used for smelting iron in southern Angola. They traded their services and labour with the Ovambo, acting as bodyguards, spies, executioners, messengers, hunters and mercenaries. While the balance of power in these relationships appears to have lain with the Ovambo, the San having to pay a yearly tribute to the Ovambo kings, the San also acted as protectors of the Ovambo at certain times, sheltering them from their enemies. Relations between the San and the Herero were less harmonious, however (Gordon 1984).

Many San communities of the early 19th century retained significant autonomy from Bantu-speakers, voluntarily attaching themselves as clients to farming communities, but participating in trade networks, which allowed them to better their social situation and gave them a degree of social mobility within the larger farmer communities. (Wilmsen 1989). Two developments are seen by Wilmsen and Denbow (1990) as critical in transforming most Kalahari San into a dispossessed serf class, however. The first was the rapid rise of Tswana polities between 1820 and 1840. These polities acquired tremendous power and introduced certain systems of social organisation such as the *mafisa* and *kgamelo* which had the effect of greatly enhancing the class ranking inherent in Tswana social structure. The social mobility of small-scale herders was reduced, they lost their herds and they were reduced to an underclass of landless servants called *malata*, or serfs. The second important development was the rise, and subsequent collapse, of the European markets for ivory and ostrich feathers from 1860 to c.1890. The San were extensively involved in this trade, either obtaining these goods themselves or acting as guides and hunters for European traders and hunters (Gordon 1984; Wilmsen 1989). With the shooting out of game and the collapse of these markets the San found it almost impossible to subsist by hunting, let alone generate a surplus for trade. They were forced

to subsist almost entirely by foraging and found themselves marginalised, at the bottom of the scale of the society encapsulating them, and it was in this state, according to Wilmsen (1989), that they were found by present-day anthropologists.

The assumed cultural conservatism and traditionalism of the San, it is thus argued, is a consequence of the manner in which they have been integrated into the modern capitalist economies of Namibia and Botswana (Wilmsen 1989). Rather than Kalahari hunter-gatherers representing the descendants of L.S.A. peoples, historically isolated from Bantu-speakers, Wilmsen and Denbow propose that "Bushmen" and "San" are invented categories -"ethnographic reifications" derived from one of a number of subsistence categories presently engaged in by the poorer members of Botswana's rural population. They conclude that "oral, historical linguistic and archaeological data are all consistent with the proposition that Khoi and San peoples, far from being icons of aboriginality, developed and controlled the means of production and trade over large parts of the Kalahari interior in earlier centuries, only being subordinated as 'Bushmen' in the 19th century when relations of power in the regions were unbalanced by European-inspired commodity production followed by colonial rule" (Wilmsen and Denbow 1990:496).

Solway and Lee (1990) have countered that certain hunter-gatherer groups, such as the Dobe !Kung, represent communities ethnically distinct from the Tswana with a lifeway and culture which has been largely unaffected by contact with these people. While they acknowledge that iron-using communities have occupied the Kalahari for much longer than was previously thought to be the case, they argue that in certain environmentally marginal areas, such as the Dobe area, San hunter-gatherers were largely uninfluenced by other societies as a result of their being isolated from larger political and economic systems. There is, they suggest, considerable variation in the extent of contact between different San groups and Bantu-speakers in Botswana, with interaction and trading relationships being most common on the river systems and margins of the desert and less common as one moves into the interior of the Kalahari Desert away from the Okavango Delta.

Trade between some hunter-gatherer groups and Bantu-speakers is acknowledged to have occurred from the time of arrival of farmers into hunter-gatherer territories in the Kalahari. They suggest, however, that it is important to distinguish between trade which is indispensable for the survival of hunter-gatherers and draws them into relationships of dependency and greater intimacy with farmers and trade which was less intense and of minimal importance to hunter-gatherers, but still produces archaeological evidence. In

the latter case the political, social and cultural autonomy of hunter-gatherer band society is likely to be retained. They argue with Yellen (1984), moreover, that there is no archaeological evidence of Iron Age occupation of the Dobe area dating to before the 20th century, and the few fragments of pottery and some iron implements found in L.S.A. deposits in this area, rather than indicating extensive interaction between hunter-gatherers and farmers, are best interpreted as evidence of intermittent trade with Iron Age settlements to the east and north (Solway and Lee 1990).

There is also no evidence, Solway and Lee suggest, that later trading contacts with Bantu-speakers had much impact on the Dobe San lifeway and culture, which, they argue, persisted largely unaffected by the dominant economic and cultural systems of the Kalahari. They point to the continued existence of certain elements of San culture amongst the Dobe !Kung (such as language, exchange systems, certain ritual practices and the kinship and name-relation system) which differentiate the San from their Bantu-speaking neighbours - although they do not deny that other aspects of San social organisation and culture have been considerably affected by contact. The distinctively San elements of culture and social organisation suggest to Solway and Lee that "foragers can be autonomous without being isolated and engaged without being incorporated" (1990:110).

It appears that during the 20th century many San, rather than being relegated to a powerless underclass within larger farming societies after the collapse of European markets for ivory, skins and ostrich feathers in 1892, in fact actively participated in trade networks. These relationships have been detailed by Gordon (1984). Many San groups were brought closer into the ambit of farming communities through these contacts, which frequently led to intermarriage, and no stigma was attached to the children born of these marriages. As a result, close ties were established between San and Ovambo communities, and during periodic crises, such as times of drought, San would go to live with Ovambo families, generally those with whom they had established trading and marriage ties. The San would also, on occasion, bring the farmers wild plant foods if crops failed (Gordon 1984). Many San communities migrated to the fringes of farmer settlements during the harvest season, assisting the farmers in their fields in return for a share of the crop (Gordon 1992). With time, these San groups stayed for longer periods and by the 1950s many had settled in Ovambo-style houses and possessed fields and cattle (Gordon 1984).

The close relations that developed between Kalahari San and black farming communities impacted on the social organisation and beliefs and ritual practices of the

San. The effects of contact were, however, highly variable and not necessarily permanent, so that forms of social organisation were adopted for a period of time, only to be abandoned and a previous pattern or a new pattern assumed (Guenther 1986). A tremendous variety of socio-economic forms came to characterise 20th century San groups. "So multiform, plastic and protean is this societal type (the hunter-gatherer band) that, within the context of the Bushmen alone, one can encounter virtually each and every one of the types and sub-types that have been distinguished amongst bands universally" (Guenther 1986:134, my bracketed addition). These variations reflect not only the varying impact of contact with farming communities, but also different environmental niches occupied by these groups. As Jacobson (1990:131, my bracketed addition) has remarked "the social reality of contact between modes (of production) was as variable as the land, the motive force behind prehistoric economies". Despite this variety, however, some major patterns of socio-economic change can be identified.

Hitchcock (1982) has detailed some of the effects of contact on Kalahari San groups. Amongst the most significant of these have been the changes in the degree of residential stability and increased dependence on domestic food sources and trade goods. These changes have been accompanied by social and political shifts common to many hunter-gatherer groups who have become increasingly sedentary (Hitchcock 1982). Possession of donkeys has allowed some hunter-gatherer groups to collect relatively large amounts of bush foods, which are then stored in protected camps, reducing the need to make regular expeditions in search of wild plant foods. It has also allowed the San to bring back large amounts of game meat, which is dried and smoked for later consumption. Wild plant foods have come to be stored in baskets, and agricultural products in mud store houses. Increased sedentism has led to an increased number of bands in specific areas, with a consequent development of competition for resource space, increased territorial demarcation and changes in rules of land ownership. Competition for territory has also affected patterns of sharing, so that relationships extending over wide areas and characterised by generalized reciprocity of the kind described by Wiessner (1977) have been replaced by smaller exchange networks characterized by balanced reciprocity (Hitchcock 1982).

Another area of San social organisation affected by contact has been that of leadership. Gullbrandsen's (1991) analysis of egalitarianism amongst a variety of San communities suggests that, rather than being deeply built into all hunter-gatherer communities, egalitarian values are context-bound and can be modified by the effects of contact. Egalitarianism, generalised reciprocity and an absence of strong leadership roles are an advantage in mobile hunter-gatherer bands, but, in conditions of increased

sedentism, rules concerning egalitarianism and reciprocity change, and we can expect social role specialisation (Gullbrandsen 1991). The rise of authority figures, Gullbrandsen has argued, is related not only to decreased mobility and its corollary, increased sedentism, but also to increased size of community and to whether members of the community share the same critical problems with respect to external groups.

Thus, in settled Nharo communities living along the Nata River, a hunt leader known as a *dzimba* emerged and took an increasingly dominant role in decision-making (Hitchcock 1982). On the other hand, where San groups have reasonably harmonious relationships with farming communities to which they are attached, instead of developing their own leaders to deal with internal conflict, they sometimes elect to place the matter of conflict resolution in the hands of leaders within these farming communities, thus relieving themselves of the onerous task of having to resolve conflicts within their own groups. The increasing tendency to allow Tswana headmen to take over the role of mediator and judge may act to increase sedentism by removing the need for the conflict to be resolved through group fission, something which, due to the absence of strong leadership in more mobile hunter-gatherer bands, is usually the only way of satisfactorily avoiding continued conflict.

Yet another effect of sedentism on San society has been the intensified ritualisation of various aspects of their social life and the increased status of traditional medical practitioners who have come to preside over dances and curings (Hitchcock 1982: Guenther 1965, 1975/6). San shamans have acquired considerable political power and their role in the curing dance has become elaborated, exotic and more specialised (Guenther 1965). The performance of the dance acts to revitalise an oppressed San rural proletariat by elevating their image both in their own eyes and in the eyes of the Tswana (Guenther 1965). San shamans and the dances they perform have not only acquired great prestige and importance in San society, but San dancers are also much in demand amongst other groups as curers and rainmakers (Gordon 1992).

While black farming communities in Botswana and Namibia have been influenced by San religious cosmology, the influence of Tswana cosmology on San belief and ritual practice should not be underestimated. San believe in the efficacy of Tswana "medicine" and greatly fear Tswana witchcraft (Guenther 1986). The medical lore of some San healers has greatly expanded, moreover, to incorporate concepts associated with the culture of Bantu-speakers, and San shamans have increased their repertoire of healing skills by learning such "foreign" procedures as divination (Guenther 1965). Conceptually, the influence of contact is evident, too, in the belief that "the substance

*tso* that lies in the stomach of the doctor which enables him to heal during trance, is considered capable now of transmitting disease in the same manner as the *khaba* substance of Tswana witch " (Guenther 1965:164). The increased tendency towards elaboration of ritual, the specialisation of the shaman's role and the esoteric nature of the curing dance which Guenther describes suggests that San shamans were adapting their role to model that of the Tswana diviner, whose role and performance is characterised by these qualities. An apparently similar influence of Sotho diviners (*Bakoma*) on the religious ideology and ritual practice of the certain Maluti San groups is discussed in my penultimate chapter.

The debate concerning the degree to which Kalahari San, such as those communities at Dobe who were studied by Lee and others, were isolated from contact with larger polities and the extent to which they were exempt from the social changes consequent upon such contact is likely to continue. Such communities, even if they did largely escape the effects of contact, were, however, almost certainly unrepresentative of most San communities occupying areas now contained within Botswana and Namibia during the 19th and 20th centuries. Most San communities in these areas probably interacted intensively with farming communities from at least the early 19th century, and some for perhaps more than a thousand years prior to this time. It is these communities, rather than the more isolated and marginalised groups at Dobe and some areas, whose experience of contact was largely typical of the Kalahari San after contact with immigrant groups. An understanding of the changes in their political and social organisation, ritual practices and religious beliefs, some of which have been detailed above, may help us to understand the processes of change undergone by south-eastern San communities resulting from their interaction with the southern Nguni and Sotho.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SOUTHERN NGUNI - SAN INTERACTION

#### 1 INTERACTION BEFORE C. A.D. 1550 - EVIDENCE FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD

The scarcity of data from hunter-gatherer and Iron Age sites in the Ciskei and Transkei dating to before A.D.1600 and indicating forms of interaction that may have occurred between early farmers and hunter-gatherers makes it difficult to determine what kinds of relationships developed between these communities in the prehistoric period. At best we can form rudimentary models based on the fuller archaeological record from Natal, on the arguable assumption that similar relationships may have developed between hunter-gatherers and farmers in the Transkei and Ciskei.

Hall (1987b, 1988) has suggested that the economies of early farmers in southern Africa did not differ greatly from those of the hunter-gatherers that they encountered, and he suggests that cattle were not initially kept by pioneer farmers. The economies of both groups, it is argued, were characterised by a "primitive communist" mode of production. Under these circumstances we might expect either competition for similar resources between the two groups or the occupation of more densely-forested areas adjacent to farming communities by hunter-gatherers, specialising in forest products, but in relatively frequent and harmonious contact with adjacent farming communities. The latter arrangement appears to have characterised hunter-gatherer and farmer communities occupying the sites of Umbeli Belli and Mpambanyani and the areas around these sites on the Natal south coast (Parkington and Hall 1987). The sustained period of overlap of L.S.A. and Iron Age sites in Natal suggests that symbiotic interaction occurred in some cases between early farmers and hunter-gatherers (Parkington and Hall 1987) and analysis of assemblages at the 7th century Iron Age site of Msluzi Confluence further suggests that trade in a variety of commodities occurred between these groups (Maggs 1980b).

Mazel (1987) sees a greater distinction than does Hall between the modes of production of hunter-gatherer and early Iron Age communities from c.1750 B.P.. His analysis of L.S.A. sites in the Thukela Basin has revealed clear differences in the faunal and plant food assemblages of hunter-gatherer and farmer sites, and these differences appear to continue through to colonial times. A degree of overlap of hunter-gatherer and

farmer material artefacts is, however, present on a number of sites until c. A.D. 1000. On the basis of these and other observations, Mazel suggests that a change in the nature of the relationships existing between hunter-gatherers and farmers occurred around this date. Relationships before A.D. 1000, it is suggested, were generally close, equitable and harmonious and probably included intermarriage. They were based on generalised reciprocity and the exchange of goods within networks similar to the *hxaro* networks of Kalahari hunter-gatherers. After A.D. 1000, relationships were probably less harmonious and characterised by trade rather than gift exchange. This change in relationships is seen as being coincident with, and resulting from, the development of a "lineage" mode of production amongst farming communities about A.D. 1000, which Hall (1987b) has suggested succeeded the "primitive communist" mode of production characteristic of farming communities prior to this date.

There are some difficulties associated with attempts to model early relationships from the archaeological record. Barham (1992) has suggested that the relatively limited data base from which archaeologists are required to extrapolate, and the difficulties associated with drawing quite detailed conclusions concerning the social relations between different communities from site assemblages, necessitate the accumulation of more information based on the archaeological record and related to interaction before these conclusions can be drawn with real confidence (but see Mazel [1992] and Wadley [1992]). Parkington and Hall (1987) have pointed to the difficulties associated with analysis of overlapping hunter-gatherer and farmer assemblages, and they suggest that we need to bear in mind the relative poverty of archaeological concepts and devices for understanding the kinds of relationship that developed between hunter-gatherers and others. They remark that overlap or admixtures in site assemblages are difficult to accurately interpret: "When are we looking at transitional economies, when are we seeing the result of exchange relationships, when may we suggest class distinctions or clientship and when are we merely dealing with a poorly resolved archaeological sequence?" (Parkington and Hall 1987:2).

These problems of site analysis are not insurmountable, however, and models of interaction between early farmers and hunter-gatherers based on archaeological data are likely to prove increasingly useful as greater attention is focussed on what has been a relatively neglected aspect of archaeological analysis. One source of data which can be used to help confirm or invalidate hypotheses regarding interaction between hunter-gatherers and farmers which are generated from archaeological data is the historical record. This record as well as oral traditions and histories are examined in the next section for evidence related to the processes of interaction that may have occurred

between the south-eastern San and southern Nguni and southern Sotho communities from c. 1550 to c.1920.

## 2 INTERACTION C.1550 TO C.1820

While archaeological studies indicate that the Transkei has been occupied by farming communities from at least the 6th or 7th centuries A.D. (Cronin 1982; Prins and Granger 1993), the earliest historical reports of such occupation date from the 16th century. Journals of the survivors of Portuguese shipwrecks dating from 1552 and 1554 describe iron-using, cattle-owning farmers occupying a sparsely-populated coast, with many villages inland (Wilson 1959, 1982b). Oral traditions and genealogies of some of main southern Nguni groups, the Xhosa, Mpondo, Mpondomise, Bomvane and Thembu, date back to at least this time (Derricourt 1976). Although there are many historical reports of southern Nguni communities in the Transkei and Ciskei before the 19th century, information concerning interaction between these people and San hunter-gatherers is much less easy to find. Where it does exist, it is generally somewhat fragmentary and describes San-Nguni relations in only a very general way. Early accounts of these relations are surveyed below.

Survivors of the Sao Joao Baptista met people hunting and gathering in the eastern Ciskei in 1662 (Derricourt 1974: 48), although we cannot be sure that they were San-speakers. Other hunter-gatherers appear to have been encountered on the Keiskamma River in 1647 by survivors of a shipwreck (Wilson 1982b:83), but again no information concerning the relations between these people and farmers appears to have been provided. Survivors of the Dutch ship, the *Stavenisse*, wrecked in 1686 about seventy miles south of present-day Durban, reported, however, that people called the "Makanaena" who possessed bows and arrows were constantly at war with the Xhosa, whose cattle they stole (Wilson 1982b:113-114). The Xhosa inhabiting this area warned the *Stavenisse* survivors of possible attacks by "Batuas", who were also armed with bows and arrows and who later reportedly killed twelve of the survivors (Moodie 1838 I:427).

There are a number of reports indicating hostility between black people and San in the 18th century. "Kaffers" were said in 1776 to protect the entrances to their huts against the arrows of the San (Godée Molsbergen 1932:13). When visiting the Winterberg areas in the last quarter of the 18th century Robert Gordon visited a "Kaffir" settlement and remarked: "Behind the Kaffirs lies a kraal, the chief of which they greatly fear.... They were lean and small in the main, all Bushmen or Bushmen-Hottentots" (Raper and Boucher 1988 I:114). This community may have been a robber band

composed of San, Khoi and other groups subsisting by cattle theft rather than by hunting and gathering. Swellengrebel recorded that hostile relations existed between "Caffers" and "Bosjesmans-Hottentots", and the latter, according to Dutch informants of Swellengrebel, were invariably killed if captured as it was feared that they would try to escape at a later date (Swellengrebel 1982:31). On at least one occasion the Xhosa offered to ally themselves with the European colonists against the San. In about 1779 the Xhosa chief Shaka (Gqunukwebe) offered to assist the European colonists in their struggles with the San, but his offer was not taken up (Marks 1972:60, note 19). The Xhosa also allied themselves with the Khoi against the San and protected Khoi cattle, which were sent to the Xhosa lest they be stolen by the San (Harinck 1969:167).

The 18th century Xhosa chief, Rharhabe, son of Phalo, waged a prolonged and bitter war against the San (Schweiger 1912:154-157). This conflict is said to have originated when the San stole and ate the favourite ox of Rharhabe, who had settled near the Kei (Brownlee 1923: 182). The San would have countered that hostilities were initiated when the Xhosa settled in their territory - according to Schweiger (1912), Keilands (the Kentani area) had been occupied by many San before the arrival of the Xhosas. Rharhabe's response to the loss of this animal was probably similar to that of a "Matchapee" (Tswana) chief encountered by Thompson near Kuruman in 1823 who "pointed a spear towards the south and south-west denouncing a curse against ox-eaters or Bushmen..." (Thompson 1967:90). After his cattle were stolen by San on another occasion at the Great Kei, Rharhabe mounted an expedition against the group responsible for the theft and attacked them in a rocky stronghold they had occupied at the junction of the Nqolosa and Great Kei. He killed all the members of the band, after which he was reported to have burnt their quivers (Schweiger 1912:156-157). Rharhabe's attacks on the San are still celebrated in Xhosa praises (Louw 1977: 148). Ndlambe, one of Rharhabe's son, does not appear to have continued the feud. In a tale concerning the adventures of a Xhosa man named Gxuluwe, this man unexpectedly encounters a group of San. He is at pains to convince them that he is connected to Ndlambe and not to Rharhabe, since "only Ndlambe people were left free when they met Bushmen" (Williams 1983:161). Interestingly, these San are reported to have asked Gxuluwe for dagga during this encounter, and I discuss the role of cannabis in trading relationships between the San and black farmers later.

Ndlambe appears to have been on good terms with the San, but one of his brothers, Nzواني, or Danster as he became known, a junior son of the Right Hand House of Rharhabe, had a more ambivalent relationship with the San (Kallaway 1982). Impoverished as a result of struggles for land and resources as well as a result of internal

fission amongst the Mdange group of the Xhosa royal house, he roamed over a wide area from c.1800 to c.1835, subsisting by trading in ivory, hunting and freebooting. While Danster frequently clashed with San groups (Lichtenstein 1930:284; Kallaway 1982), he also attracted a number of San groups whom he found useful in the many conflicts in which he was involved (Kallaway 1982:152). Although a Xhosa chief, Danster's position was not typical of those chiefs who headed settled communities, however, and his clashes and alliances with San groups and individuals appear to have reflected opportunistic strategies which allowed him to pursue a peripatetic and predatory lifeway.

There are a number of other accounts of clashes between the San and the Xhosa in the early years of the 19th century and shortly before this time. At the turn of the 18th century Barrow (1801:201, my bracketed addition) observed that "like the Dutch peasantry they (the "Kaffers") have declared perpetual war against the Bosjemans". These "Bosjesmans" may have been San hunter-gatherer bands or larger robber bands consisting of San, Khoi and other groups. Ludwig Alberti, an officer in the service of the Batavian Republic, remarked that a state of intense hostility existed between some Xhosa groups and the San in 1807 (Fehr 1968:87). The Xhosa, were subjected to persistent cattle raids by the San, and, according to Alberti, when they managed to capture the San they treated them like "beasts of prey" sparing no one regardless of age or sex. Burchell (1953, I:162) also reported that some Xhosa groups were subjected to constant attacks by "Bushmen" and Campbell (1815:121) noted a report that in 1813 "Caffers" at the Sea Cow River were attacked by "Bushmen".

While many Xhosa groups were clearly engaged in bitter struggles with the San before 1820, some Xhosa communities, as well as other southern Nguni groups, are known to have developed close relationships with the San. San who had lived near the Cape Colony were protected by the Xhosa chief, Hintsu, and in 1809 they occupied a kraal about midway between the "Zomo" (Tsomo) and "Kyba" (Kei) Rivers and the sea (Collins 1838:44). San became tributary to Xhosa chiefs, and there were more San than Gona Khoi living amongst the Gcaleka according to one report (Peires 1981:24). According to Paterson (Forbes and Rourke 1980:134) even Rharhabe at one stage allied himself with "Bochmens" against his brother and enemy Gcaleka, whose cattle were raided by the San, perhaps those allied to Rharhabe. This suggests that Rharhabe was prepared to make his peace with the San should the balance of power existing in his area favour or require such an alliance. Extensive intermarriage is also reported to have occurred between some Xhosa groups and the San (Bryant 1929, 1964). One Xhosa clan, the isi Thatu, is reportedly partly San in origin (Peires 1981 :24), and the charismatic Xhosa prophet leader, Nxele, had two San wives (Peires 1981:70). Other southern Nguni

tribes, such as the Mpondomise and Thembu, are also known to have intermarried with the San for a considerable period of time.

An early Mpondomise chief, Ncwini, married a San woman and their son, Cira, succeeded his father as chief above the claim of an older Mpondomise half-brother (Cape of Good Hope 1883 Part II: 403, testimony of "Vete"). Ncwini is estimated to have died between 1495 and 1555 (Derricourt 1974:59). The Mpondomise chief, Mandela, was related to the San and probably had a San wife in 1850 (Cape GH 8/23:375, statement of Finisin ; Cape GH 8/23: 407, statement of Mr Thomas). This suggests that the Mpondomise custom of intermarrying with the San may have been a continuous one, stretching from at least the 16th century until the middle of the 19th century, and probably later. Intermarriage between Mpondomise chiefs and San was noted by Orpen, who reported that Mhlonhlo, a 19th century chief of the eastern section of the Mpondomise was the grandson of a San woman (Orpen 1905). Such marriages were clearly socially sanctioned, since the chief himself took a San wife. According to Mxalmi, an Mpondomise informant, Ncwini's San wife was highly thought of and the Mpondomise were proud of their descent from this woman (Callaway 1919: 16-17). The tradition concerning Ncwini's marriage to a San woman is still preserved amongst the Mpondomise, who recount how Ncwini met his wife on a hunting expedition and at first mistook her for a wild animal. She is said to have made Ncwini a stew and he stayed the night with her, with the result that she gave birth to a son, Cira. Ncwini already had a son called Dosini, and "when the two boys grew up they came to receive gifts from Ncwini who crossed his hands in giving it to them, thereby indicating that the chieftainship would go to Cira" (Prins 1992:132).

The Thembu (or "Tambookies", as they were often referred to in the historical record) also had close relations with the San. Their skin was reported to be considerably lighter than many other Nguni groups, which may suggest a long history of intermarriage with the San (Derricourt 1974:50), and this mixture of physical type is reflected in Le Vaillant's late 18th century portraits of "Tamboekie" (Wilson 1982b:106). According to Stow, who obtained his information from "native and other sources" as well as from accounts by Paterson and Sparrman, a San group called the "Tambu'ki", "Chinese or Snese Hottentots", who possessed cattle, occupied an area close to the Tsomo River in 1776. These people were described to Sparrman by the "Chinese Bushmen" as being like themselves in complexion, but more powerful and warlike. Paterson suggests that they were originally a San group who intermarried with pioneering clans of the Thembu. When the Thembu split after a quarrel the weaker group joined the "Tambu'ki Bushmen" and amalgamated with them (Stow 1905:169-170).

Certain of the historical accounts which refer to Tambookies or groups with similar names may refer to Thembu groups with a large admixture of San blood. Wikar reported that a group called "Tkaboek" were living in the vicinity of the Orange River in about 1775. They subsisted by hunting and gathering and were therefore considered "Bosjesmans, but kept links with settled peoples, unlike many "Bosjesmans" groups (Mossop and van der Horst 1935:205). Some lived amongst the "Hottentots" and were employed by them to provide a variety of services. They were often used as mercenaries, sharing in the booty of war, including cattle. When not acting as mercenaries they were paid with "gifts of flesh and other food", which they supplemented partly by hunting and gathering and partly by raiding the cattle of "Hottentot" groups to whom they were not attached (Mossop and van der Horst 1935:105).

The close association between the Thembu and San is attested to not only by their physical appearance, but also by certain customs which are indicative of harmonious relationships having been established between them. Joseph Warner, attached to Clarkbury Mission, told Backhouse that "Tambookies" of that area allowed any "Bushmen" accompanying their hunting parties to choose the most desirable portions of any large game killed. They were even given precedence over any "Tambookie" chiefs present. This was done in recognition of their having originally occupied the land then occupied by the "Tambookies" (Backhouse 1844:273). The Thembu practised the custom of amputating the first joint of one of their fingers (Stow 1905:170). This is also done by some Mpondo, Xhosa and Zulu groups, but the custom is generally acknowledged to have been borrowed from the San (Wilson 1982b:106). Close relations between the Thembu and San are reflected in the praises of the Thembu, one of which is still "the tiny man" (Wilson 1979:60). The Thembu, moreover, still possess a number of San-derived dances, which are very different from other Thembu dances. These are shuffling dances, with complex rhythms, and people dancing them are reported to sometimes fall into a light state of trance (Jasmine Honore pers. comm.).

### 3 INTERACTION C.1820 TO C.1850

The disruptions resulting from the onset of the Difaqane in 1822 caused a number of northern Nguni groups to move southwards. These people, the Bhaca as well as the Mfengu, (a generic term referring to refugees from different clans), settled in the Transkei, came to speak Xhosa and are now classed as southern Nguni. The effects of the Difaqane on San-Nguni relations are not fully known, but the San can hardly have escaped becoming involved in these struggles and their relations with the southern Nguni

would almost certainly have been affected (Wright 1971:15). The likelihood that relationships of dependency would have been created between impoverished farmers and the San in times of crisis, such as the Difaqane, will be discussed later. Documented accounts and oral traditions dealing with San-southern Nguni interaction between 1820 and 1850 are detailed here.

There appear to be few published accounts of relations between the southern Nguni and San in the period between 1820 and the arrival of large numbers of European settlers and missionaries in the Ciskei and Transkei in the 1830s. Thompson (1968:7) reported that "Caffers" who migrated to "Bushmen" country east of the Zak River waged a war with San living in this area. It is not clear, however, whether the "Caffers" referred to were southern Nguni or Sotho-Tswana. Andrew Geddes Bain encountered a mixed band of "Bushmen" and "Caffers" c.1828 who were apparently living by hunting and gathering, as well by trading ivory, in hills near the Mzimvubu River (Lister 1949:118). Bain purchased cattle to exchange for ivory with them, and it appears that he was not the first to have done so. They consisted of about thirty families, and the presence of Bantu-speakers amongst them suggests that it may have been relatively easy for southern Nguni to attach themselves to San communities.

As with the San protected by Hintsas, referred to above, this group had moved away from the Colony - in this case to escape the constant attacks on them by the Dutch. They appear to have been protected by the southern Nguni of that area, to whom they may have been attached as clients. The Reverend W.B. Boyce also encountered a San community near the Mzimvubu two years later. He reported: "My last visit ... was to a party of Bushmen, living in some wretched sheds close to the Zimvoobo. They usually roam about between the river and Natal, shooting elephants, the flesh of which they eat, and exchange the ivory with Faku's people for corn and tobacco" (Steedman 1835 II:280). Boyce's account suggests that the Mpondo under Faku may have been acting as middlemen in the ivory trade, obtaining ivory from the San, perhaps in return for their protection and a variety of farmer goods, and trading the ivory on to Europeans.

By the 1830s the effects of the presence of Europeans were being increasingly felt in the Ciskei and Transkei. Fort Willshire had been established as an official trading post on the Keiskamma River in 1824 (Derricourt 1977:191) and trade between the Xhosa and the Colony increased greatly after this date. The legalisation of trading and settlement by Europeans in the Transkei from about 1830 brought an influx of traders, and the numbers of Europeans were swollen by the arrival of missionaries and the establishment of mission stations in the 1820s and 1830s (Derricourt 1974). With the arrival of large

numbers of European farmers from the colony in the late 1830s a new phase in European - southern Nguni relations began, and this was, in turn, to have a marked effect on relations between the south-eastern San and black farming communities.

While San living in the Caledon River valley seem to have largely lost their independence from farming communities by the 1830s, San in the more mountainous areas to the east and on the isolated plateau of East Griqualand retained a greater measure of autonomy until the second half of the 19th century. These bands appear to have entered into relationships with adjacent farming communities which were of a looser form than on the Caledon (Wright 1971:17). Closer relationships developed after the arrival of European farmers and hunters in the late 1830s, however. Black farmers collaborated with the San in cattle raids, and many relationships based on trade in the cattle of European farmers were established between these groups (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976).

With the rapid increase in San thefts of cattle, the colonial authorities placed pressure on the Mpondo chief, Faku, as well as on Bhaca and Mpondomise chiefs, to act against San living within their territories. These demands were initially resisted, partly because of their relationships with the San based on stock raiding, partly because they were often in no position to trace and apprehend the San in rugged, broken country and partly because some of the chiefs, such as the Mpondomise chief, Mandela, were related to the San. Relationships existing between San and southern Nguni communities in 1850 were detailed in an enquiry, commissioned in that year by the colonial authorities, into cattle theft by San in "Nomansland" (East Griqualand). These relationships have been discussed by Wright (1971:114-137) and Vinnicombe (1976:57-75), but will be generally surveyed here and supplemented with some details not mentioned by these authors.

#### 4 INTERACTION C.1850 TO C.1872

At least three San bands were known to have occupied Nomansland and adjacent areas in 1850. One band, under Mdwebo, roamed an area between the Ngeli Mountains and the Mzimvubu River. They were living at this time at the Mzimvubu, in the territory of the Bhaca. Mdwebo's band appears to have fluctuated in size from fifteen men, plus women and children, to one hundred and seventeen men, women and children. A second small band headed by Nqabayoy lived in an area bordering the Tina River, a tributary of the Mzimvubu. A third and much larger band, the Thola, were under the leadership of Biligwana. This group consisted of about two hundred San, Khoi and runaway servants. They appear to have subsisted largely on stolen cattle and were armed with guns. They

also hunted game on the plains at the base of the Drakensberg near the headwaters of the Mzimvubu, however, and were active on both sides of the Drakensberg. A fourth band, the Mbaklu, had occupied the upper reaches of the Mzimvubu as well, but their location was not known in 1850.

All these bands at one time or another had recruited from the Bhaca or Mpondomise, and all appear to have been involved in the trading of stolen cattle to these groups in 1850 and for some years before this date. The Mpondomise chief, Mandela, as well as the Bhaca chiefs, Mchithwa and his brother, Bhekezulu, in particular, collaborated with San bands who stole cattle and horses from European farms. In return for these animals or parts of these animals, such as ox tails (used by the Bhaca for ornamental dress), the San received dogs, "corn" and tobacco. On the occasions when trading took place there was generally much feasting and fraternising between the groups. Sometimes the farmers kraaled stolen cattle for the San (Wright 1971:116; Vinnicombe 1976:60) and on other occasions a form of cattle-laundering took place, with the farmers exchanging cattle recently stolen by the San for cattle which they already possessed (Cape GH 8/23:379, statement of Finisin), presumably in order to make it more difficult for European farmers to trace their cattle.

The Bhaca, perhaps because they were relatively recent immigrants to the area, appear not to have intermarried with the San (Cape GH 8/23:375, statement of Finisin). Their alliances with the San were probably formed purely on the basis of collaboration in the trade in stolen cattle, and perhaps other goods. The alliances between the San and the Mpondomise, on the other hand, were also based on intermarriage, and, as mentioned above, existed as early as the 16th century. Mdwebo was related to Mandela by marriage (Wright 1971:56; Vinnicombe 1976:74), and "belonged" to the Mpondomise during Mandela's great grandfather's time (Cape GH 8/23:436, statement of Hans Lochenburg). Nqabayo's band, who lived on the Tina River, were related to those of Mdwebo (Vinnicombe 1976:74) and hence to Mandela. It was probably Nqabayo's people who were visited by Hans Lochenburg at the Tina River c.1850, and were reported to provide tribute of "tiger skins", "elephant teeth" and other goods to Mandela (Cape GH 8/23:386, statement of Hans Lochenburg). Mdwebo, as a vassal of Mandela, may well have been required to pay similar tribute.

It does not appear that the Thola traded cattle or intermarried with the Bhaca or Mpondomise, although they may well have done so with Sotho groups nearer to the base of the Drakensberg where they were located. They certainly raided cattle extensively, but these appear to have been slaughtered and eaten, rather than bred. Huge numbers of

cattle bones were found at one of their kraals, enough to provide them with material for building these enclosures. One of their kraals was constructed of "stakes driven into the ground, wattled by strips of hide from the slaughtered cattle, and with the interstices well filled with skulls and horns" (Vinnicombe 1976:63).

Neither Mdwebo's nor Nqabayo's band seem to have settled, and they appear to have moved constantly from one place to another following the game (Wright 1971:61). They subsisted largely by hunting, but probably supplemented their subsistence base to a greater or lesser extent by raiding of European farms for horses and cattle. In their nomadic lifestyle, as well as their physical appearance, dress and their construction of "impromptu" huts (Wright 1971:60-61) Mdwebo's band resembled typical San hunter-gatherers. They could nevertheless speak a Bantu language (Wright 1971: 60) and the band included several members of the Mpondomise under Mandela, to whom Mdwebo said he was related (Wright 1971:56). Thus, while in some senses representing a typical San hunter-gatherer community, Mdwebo's band were nevertheless closely linked to the Mpondomise, some of whom had joined his band.

By 1850, pressure placed on chiefs collaborating with the San in thefts of European farmers' cattle caused rifts to develop between many of these chiefs and the San (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976), as well as, apparently, between those who felt the San should be attacked in order to appease the European authorities and those unwilling to act against the San under their protection (Cape GH 8/23: 375, statement of Finisin). The seizure in 1850 of one thousand cattle from the Mpondo chief, Faku, by the Crown Prosecutor, Walter Harding, in retaliation for his failure to prevent San stock raids, forced Faku to act against the San, and he is rumoured to have fallen upon and killed a large number of them after being fined so heavily (Vinnicombe 1976:64). Both the Bhaca chief Bhekezulu, who had kraaled stolen cattle for the San, and his brother, Mchithwa, also acted against the San. Bhekezulu ordered the San to build their own kraals (Cape GH 8/23:376, statement of Finisin), and Mchithwa was struck by two poisoned arrows and killed while pursuing a San band that had stolen cattle from the Bhaca (Vinnicombe 1976:65).

At about this time a number of Thembu groups living on the White Kei, including "Jumba", father of the Thembu chief, "Umgudhluwa", were on comparatively friendly terms with San "families and clans" living in that area, according to a statement made by Silayi, a subject of Jumba's, to Sir Walter Stanford (Macquarrie 1962:31). Silayi was well qualified to inform Stanford about the San and their relationships with farming communities, having lived with "Ngqabayi's" (Nqabayo's) band for about three years in

the 1850s. This band, according to Silayi (Macquarrie 1962), was at that time roaming an area at the base of the Drakensberg close to the Xuka River (the largest tributary of the Mbashee) and the Qanquru (Mooi) River, a tributary of the Tsitsa. The band comprised forty-three men most of whom were armed with bows and arrows, although they also possessed assegais and flintlocks. Silayi was accepted into the band on the basis of his friendship with his companion, Ngqika, who was "half a Bushman". Ngqika, Silayi and a "Hottentot" companion "received bows and arrows and became members of the tribe" (Macquarrie 1962:33). This may suggest that the possession of bows and arrows signified membership of San society and that non-San were given these traditional San weapons when accepted into their society.

Silayi reported that the San were on friendly terms with neighbouring Bantu-speakers. They visited their kraals to ask for milk, although, unbeknown to the farmers, they sometimes stole stock from them on these occasions. They also received tinder-boxes from the farmers, whose language they appear to have been able to speak, and San "rain doctors" were employed by the farmers in the dry season. Perhaps as a result of their contact with the more hierarchically-organised black farming communities, institutions of leadership were more developed than may have been the case in some earlier San communities. Nqabayoy, unlike other men in the band, had two wives and he controlled the preparation and dispensing of the poison for their arrows. They appear to have been culturally distinguished from farming communities in certain respects, however.

In 1857 Nqabayoy fell out with the Thembu chief, Mgudhluwa, by which time Silayi had returned to the Thembu. Three members of his band stole horses from this chief, who surrounded and attacked the San at Gubenxa. All the San men, other than those (including Nqabayoy) who were away hunting, were killed in the attack. The women and children captives were killed by the younger warriors while being taken back to the Thembu, although this was apparently done without Mgudhluwa's knowledge (Statement of Umgudhluwa, 1908. Stanford Papers, Jagger Library). Silayi provided a slightly different account of this attack, reporting that, aside from Nqabayoy and those hunting with him, two San boys and Nqabayoy's daughter managed to escape. The survivors of the band took refuge in the territory of Mditshwa, chief of the western section of the Mpondomise. Some of the San later returned to the mountains, and the last Silayi heard of them they were at the sources of the Mzimvubu (Macquarrie 1962:37).

In the 1850s and 1860s the upper regions of the Mzimvubu, which were still quite well populated with game (Opperman 1987:34; Halford 1949:102; How 1962:39) and

appear to have been a haven for a number of San bands (Derricourt 1974:50) were settled by various refugee groups. These included Khoi from the Cape Colony, who formed alliances with the San and black farmers. The expansion of the Sotho under Moshoeshe caused many San to leave the Drakensberg and move into Nomansland, and they were followed by the Sotho themselves in 1858 (Vinnicombe 1976:67-68). In addition to these immigrants, Nomansland was occupied by Sotho refugees from the Seqiti War of 1865 between the Sotho and the Orange Free State, causing the San to retreat into remoter areas. San refugees are likely to have accompanied them, placing increasing pressure on the resources of hunter-gatherers in the area. The arrival of these groups, as well as the Griquas under Adam Kok, who moved into the area between 1859 and 1862, resulted in great competition for land and resources, and this disrupted the area to such an extent that a commission of 1872 found the whole of Nomansland to be in a state of chaos (Vinnicombe 1976:70). "Nomansland gave way to East Griqualand, and the Bushmen gave way to everyone. Except in a few isolated pockets, they appear not to have survived as distinct social entities still preserving the traditions and practices of hunter-gatherers" (Vinnicombe 1976:70).

## 5 INTERACTION AFTER 1872

The last thefts of livestock from European farmers attributed to San were recorded in 1872 (Wright 1971: 187; Vinnicombe 1976:96) and it is less easy to trace the history of the San and their relations with the southern Nguni thereafter. The interest of the colonial authorities in the San was never anthropological, and the cessation of San raids on European farmers appears to have resulted in the virtual disappearance of the San from the written record. This complicates the task of attempting to reconstruct the processes by which the San came to be incorporated into southern Nguni society. The general absence of references to the San in the territory of the southern Nguni should not, however, be seen as indicating that all San communities were fully incorporated into southern Nguni society immediately after 1872, living together with these people in their settlements. The process of incorporation is likely to have been a more gradual one, and the few accounts of surviving San communities after this date help elucidate the processes of change undergone by the south-eastern San prior to their complete incorporation into southern Nguni communities.

It appears that until c.1920 some families and small communities whose members were largely or exclusively of San descent continued to live separately from, but in regular contact with, the southern Nguni communities by whom they were encapsulated. They were distinguished from the neighbouring farmers in one or more of the following

ways: they spoke a San language as well as one or more Nguni languages; they lived in rock shelters or crude huts; they painted on rocks or the walls of caves; and they did not cultivate crops or keep stock (Jolly 1992:89).

There are a number of reports of such small communities living in the Transkei or East Griqualand between 1872 and c. 1920 (Jolly 1992). While these people could well have continued to hunt smaller animals and gather on a limited scale, most were probably dependent to a greater or lesser extent for their subsistence on offerings provided by the farming communities in return for rain-making services. The reputation of the San as great rainmakers was widespread amongst the southern Nguni, and the Mpondomise in particular (Cape GH 1883:409, statement of Mabasa; Gibson 1891:34; Rev.Green 1896:6-7; Hook 1908:327; Scully 1913:288; Callaway 1919:50; Macquarrie 1962:35; Jolly 1986:6; Prins 1990). This reputation appears to have been traded upon by the San and allowed a number of smaller communities to live separately from farming communities, depending on tribute derived from rainmaking rather than cultivation or the keeping of livestock, until a later date than would have been possible had they been forced to rely solely on hunting and gathering for subsistence or trade. I have discussed some of the relationships which may have been established between these small communities and the farming communities with which they were associated elsewhere (Jolly 1992).

Possibly the last such community lived in a rock shelter next to the Inqu River in the Tsolo District, Transkei, and went to live in huts amongst the Mpondomise c.1920 (Jolly 1986; Lewis-Williams 1986; Prins 1990). The reputation of these people as rainmakers preceded them, as appears to have been the case for other San who went to live amongst the southern Nguni (Prins 1990). They and their descendants continued to perform rainmaking rituals for the farming communities into which they were absorbed (Jolly 1986; Prins 1990), and the influence of these people and their forebears on the cosmology of the southern Nguni is still widely felt (Botha and Thackeray 1987; Thackeray 1988; Prins 1990).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SOUTHERN SOTHO - SAN INTERACTION

#### 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND SAN-SOUTHERN SOTHO INTERACTION

Archaeological excavation of L.S.A sites in Lesotho has produced some evidence which may indicate contact between hunter-gatherers and farming communities. Well-fired, grit-tempered, undecorated L.S.A. and Iron Age pottery has been found at Sehonghong and other sites ( Mitchell pers. comm.). Fragments of iron at Belleview, glass beads at Moshebi's Shelter and a sheep mandible at Melikane may also indicate interaction. (Mitchell 1992). While excavations have been, and are presently being, conducted at Sehonghong Cave (Carter 1978; Carter, Mitchell and Vinnicombe 1988; Mitchell pers. comm.), this site and a number of other excavated sites, such as Melikane, have compressed Holocene sequences, however, and the contact period is poorly represented (Mitchell pers. comm).

Limited evidence for interaction and its effects on San society has been found to the west of Lesotho at Rose Cottage Cave in the Ladybrand District (Wadley 1992a). Recycled Middle Stone Age artefacts found near the cave may be evidence of the restricted mobility of stone tool knappers, who were possibly unable to make the journey to the Caledon River to obtain fresh opaline nodules as a result of the social disruptions of the area during the 19th century (Wadley 1992a:11). Other possible evidence for restricted mobility of San occupying this cave in later times includes the shortage of traditional exchange items such as beadwork in the upper assemblages. This may indicate that trade with neighbouring Sotho farmers replaced traditional systems of exchange between San communities over a wide area (Wadley 1992a). One might expect the stress associated with restricted mobility and the documented widespread social disruption of the area in the 19th century to be reflected in the material culture at Rose Cottage Cave, Wadley argues. The upper level assemblages, however, show no signs of technological deterioration, and Wadley (1992a:11) remarks that "(t)his is a chastening observation for archaeologists because it implies that stone tool technology need not be useful as indicator of social change".

Despite some limitations of archaeological analysis, comparison of information from archaeological sites occupied by San communities in the higher (eastern) and lower

(western) areas of Lesotho, which may have relatively stable and unstable patterns of interaction with farmers respectively, should allow us to examine the differential impact of interaction on these communities (Mitchell 1992:27). Differential patterns of interaction may likewise be revealed along a north-south gradient, reflecting different intensities of contact and the different lengths of time over which San in these areas interacted with Sotho farmers (Mitchell 1992:28). The geographical distribution of the various Sotho groups is also likely to be a relevant factor in determining patterns of interaction in different areas. Hunter-gatherer sites in areas occupied by farming communities traditionally known to have established symbiotic relationship with the San are likely to differ from those in areas occupied by farmers less well-disposed towards the San. As I argue later, the presence or absence of such symbiotic relationships, including those based on cattle raiding, may explain some of the distributional patterns of contact paintings in the southern and northern Drakensberg. We can also expect the overt and symbolic content of the rock art in areas occupied by hunter-gatherers, who had intermarried and established other close relationships with black farmers, to reflect the influence of this contact.

## 2 INTERACTION c.1600 TO c.1822

At some time, probably during the 14th or 15th centuries A.D. (Maggs 1976b), farming communities who had occupied the central and south-central Transvaal, as well as groups of Nguni origin who occupied the upper Thukela Basin, began to migrate southwards and westwards into areas occupied solely by hunter-gatherers. It has been suggested that this movement coincided with a change in the economy of these communities from one based on horticulture to an economy characterised by dependence on livestock for subsistence, thus allowing the grasslands to be effectively exploited (Hall 1987a:47). The influence of the moving frontiers established by these groups on the hunter-gatherers they encountered is likely to have been considerable, and recorded oral histories and traditions as well as historical reports relating to interaction between the immigrant farming communities and hunter-gatherers are presented in this chapter.

Traditions concerning the movement of these early Sotho and Nguni groups have been surveyed and discussed by Maggs (1976a). The Phetla, a Zizi (Nguni) group from the Thukela Basin, appear to have been the first Bantu-speakers to occupy the Caledon Valley. They crossed the Drakensberg from the north and eventually settled in south-eastern Lesotho, where they were later joined by two other Zizi groups, the Polane and the Phuti. The earliest Sotho group to occupy the southern Highveld was probably the Fokeng - the traditions of all the present Sotho groups except the Phetla mention the

Fokeng's being already settled in the areas when they arrived. They migrated from the central Transvaal after a split in their tribe and spread out over a wide area, from north of the Vaal to the southern boundary of Lesotho and as far south as Natal and Transkei. Three Sotho lineage clusters, the Koena, Taung and Kgatla (which later came to include the Makholakoe, Maphuting, Tlokoa, Sia and Kubung groups) formed the main stream of Sotho entering the southern Highveld, migrating from the south-central Transvaal and occupying the northern areas of Lesotho. By the end of the 17th century most of these groups had settled south of the Vaal, the moving frontier appears to have ended and a relatively stable frontier situation had been established (Maggs 1976a).

#### A) THE POLANE, PHETLA, PHUTI AND THE SAN

These three clans of Nguni origin amalgamated into one clan under the Phuti chief, Moorosi, after the Difaqane but each clan kept its own *siboko* (Damane pers. comm.), "the emblem, usually an animal, by which a particular lineage or descent group swears and thus by which they identify themselves as related" (Maggs 1976a:306). Of the three clans, the Polane appear to have had the least amicable relations with the San during the early stages of their interaction. They are reported to have quickly brought the San under their rule, but their mode of warfare was clearly influenced by the San as they used bows and arrows, as well as the traditional shields, assegais and battle-axes of the Sotho (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:24).

The traditions of the Phetla, the first of these groups, and probably of all Sotho groups, to migrate into the Caledon Valley suggest that their relations with the San they encountered were friendly. They are said to have married the daughters of the San and employed their sons as herds (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:21). During the 18th century, the Phetla chief, Matelile, married a San woman who was living in a large cave at what is now called Ntlo-kholo. She refused to leave the cave and live in a hut on the plain below the hill on which the cave was sited, and Matelile consequently agreed to build his hut inside the cave itself. According to Ellenberger and Macgregor (1912:22) and Walton (1956a:27) the cave was subsequently named Ntlo-kholo, meaning "great hut", but Sekese (1905b, 1924a) remarks that Ntlo-kholo was the name of this San woman. The Phetla chief, Setlho, who was still living in the early 19th century, stayed together with his people and "some Bushmen" at "Kaqhoha" (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:22), and these San were said to have "belonged to" him (Moshesh 1880:290).

The Phuti, the last of the Zizi groups from the Thukela to enter Lesotho (c. 1700), are also said to have had good relations with the San whom they first encountered.

Mbulane, one of the two founder chiefs of the Phuti who migrated into the Caledon Valley, was guided by the San on long expeditions into the mountains "to view the land" when the Phuti settled at "Korokoro" (Sekese 1905a). Nothing further concerning their relations with the San appears to have been recorded until the time of Mokuoane, father of the 19th century Phuti chief, Moorosi. Mokuoane traded karosses made from the skins of wild animals for cattle with other farmers, and his mother helped him obtain these skins by growing tobacco and dagga, which she traded for skins and ostrich feathers with the San (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:27).

## B) THE GHOYA (TAUNG AND KUBUNG) AND THE SAN

Ghoya is a collective name for the Taung and Kubung groups who merged about the time of the Difaqane (Maggs 1976b:327). Although the Taung and Kubung retained their different *sibokos*, they have sometimes been referred to by the same name, Ghoya, as a result of their later merging. Where possible the two groups are distinguished here.

Both these Sotho groups appear to have established close relations with the San at an early stage of their occupation of the southern Highveld. The Kubung occupied the north-western areas of the Orange Free State c.1700, and, according to Moletsane (1967:29), in those days it was "a fine country, sparsely inhabited by families of Bushmen, and Letsibalo's people (the Kubung) were soon on the best of terms with the Baroa" (my bracketed addition). According to one of Stow's informants, the relations of the "Leghoya" with the San whom they encountered after crossing the Vaal from the north and north-west were harmonious. Within a short time the two groups intermarried and San in their area began to settle and acquire livestock (Walton 1965:30). Another of Stow's informants remarked that the "Leghoya" and San "so mixed their languages together that the two people could understand one another" (Walton 1965:30), and the Ghoya still refer to themselves as the "the brothers of the Bushmen" (Walton 1965:37).

The close relationship existing between the Taung, Kubung and the San is attested to by other traditions. A Taung group (later known as the Taung of Moletsane) found many San living at Matloangtloang when they arrived in the area. Some of the hunter-gatherers attached themselves to the Taung, herding and hunting for them, and intermarriage occurred between the San and these farming communities, while other San retained a greater degree of independence (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:56). The Taung at this time are said to have subsisted to a large extent on game, having had little else to live on for a century and a half (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:56). The Kubung of Ramokhele (the Baramokhele) had particularly close ties with the San in early

times intermarrying with them and accompanying them on hunts (Moshesh 1880:290). San fought together with the Taung chief, Ramokhele, against the Koena chief, Monyane. According to Sekese (1912a) these San were "owned" by the Fokeng of Liyane, who were in alliance with Ramokhele's father, Moreme. Monyane was struck by a poisoned arrow during the course of this skirmish and died (Sekese 1912a; Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:64).

The Taung placed such trust in the San that, when their future chief Makhothi was born c. 1788, his mother sent him in infancy to be reared by San herds under Kaabi at an outlying cattle post, hoping thereby to evade the evil spirits associated with the death of his siblings who had died at birth. The San took good care of him and renamed him Moletsane - the San name for a girdle of ostrich-eggshell beads, which they had made for him. He was henceforth known as Moletsane rather than Makhothi, his Sesotho name (Macgregor 1904:58; Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:57-58). Moletsane later unified a number of Taung offshoots and included among them a group of independent San under the leaders Quonsop and Deqai (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:6).

### C) THE FOKENG AND THE SAN .

Early relations between the Fokeng and San were generally harmonious according to their traditions. The early Fokeng chief, Komane, lived on friendly terms with San occupying a cave near Futhane (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:68). Patron-client relationships appear to have been established between the Fokeng and the San before the Difaqane. As has already been mentioned, the Fokeng of Liyane were "owners of the Baroa" in the time of Ramokhele's father, Moreme (Sekese 1912a).

Fokeng groups settled at Ntsuanatsatsi. They intermarried with the San there, and the chief of the Fokeng married a San chief's daughter (Walton 1956a: 27). According to Orpen this place is situated between present-day Frankfort and Vrede (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:18). Orpen (1907) states that this marriage was disapproved of, causing the Fokeng to split and the Fokeng chief to move away to "Kaffirland" with his San wife and some of his followers. According to Walton (1956b:2), the marriage itself was not disapproved of, but a faction within the Fokeng, as well as the Koena who had also settled in the area, refused to serve under the son of this San woman when the Fokeng chief died. The clan consequently split, and the main section under the chief of mixed San-Fokeng blood migrated eastwards over the Drakensberg. It is uncertain whether this took place about the middle of the 16th or 17th centuries (Walton 1956b:2), but this section of the Fokeng eventually settled amongst the Thembu in the Transkei, where they

adopted the culture and language of the Thembu and became known by the Xhosa equivalent of their name, the ama-Vundle. They finally settled in southern Basutoland in the Mjanyane Valley (Walton 1956b:2).

It is clear from this tradition that, under certain circumstances, some Sotho groups disapproved of marriage between Sotho and San. It appears, however, that it was not intermarriage *per se* that was disapproved of, but rather that some Sotho objected to being ruled over by someone of San descent. This may explain Moshoeshoe's remark concerning Moletsane: "Moroahaabuse" - "a Bushman cannot rule" (Maggs 1976a:307).

#### D) THE KOENA AND THE SAN

There appears to be only one Koena tradition recorded which relates to their early relations with the San. According to this tradition an early Koena chief, Kali, "bought" the territory of the San in exchange for a present of dagga (Sekese 1912a; Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:77-78). According to Ellenberger and Macgregor (1912:77-78), this Koena chief was renamed Monaheng as a result of this transaction.

#### 2 INTERACTION c.1822 TO c.1836

The effects of the Difaqane struggles first began to be felt in 1822 when Nguni groups crossed the Drakensberg into areas occupied by the southern Sotho, and for approximately the next six years these and other refugee groups fought each other and the Sotho in the Caledon Valley (Wright 1971:16). Some of the recorded and probable effects of these struggles on the Sotho and San have been detailed by Wright (1971). Sotho traditions and historical records relating to interaction between the Sotho and San during this period and until 1836 will be surveyed in this section.

Many of the farming communities disrupted by the Difaqane struggles were forced to subsist by hunting and gathering. The Fokeng lived on game in the Rouxville area in about 1822 (Macgregor 1904:22), and at these times the farmers appear to have been aided by San communities. The Koena of Monaheng were greatly helped by the San during the time of the Difaqane. Norton (1910a:115) was told by an old Koena woman that "(t)he pressure of famine was so great among her own people, owing to the constant raiding which made it not worth while sowing where no one knew who would reap, that even the children had to be fed on game as soon as they were weaned, and they were glad to learn from the despised Bushmen in the neighbourhood of Mequatleng how to snare the plentiful game by digging pits with a light covering of branches". Some

Sotho, probably those that had resorted to hunting and gathering, obtained supplies of "corn" by trading skins with Sotho living in less disrupted areas, who were still able to sow and harvest crops (Norton 1910a:116).

The increased pressure placed on the resources of hunter-gatherers as a result of competition for these resources from Sotho refugees, as well as competition for the occupation of rock shelters, must have impacted on the San (Wright 1971:16). The mobility of the San, their intimate knowledge of the remoter areas in the mountains and the fact that they possessed no crops and few if any cattle which could be stolen would, however, have been to their advantage, and probably ensured that they were not as badly affected by the struggles as their Sotho neighbours. Some San groups, nevertheless, appear to have been caught up in the fighting, supporting those Sotho groups to whom they were allied. Thus San fought with Setlho's Phetla against the Tlokoa at this time (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:134) and the Phuti were reported to have used poisoned arrows in their struggles with the Ngwane (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:187) - perhaps the arrows of their San allies. It may be to these struggles that Orpen (1907) was referring when he remarked that San were formed into regiments during the Sotho inter-tribal wars. Certainly, such regiments appear to have existed - the Koena chief, Makhetha, is said to have divided his warriors into four corps, one of which consisted of San archers (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:197).

Ties between the San and the Taung of Ramokhele were adversely affected by the struggles (Walton 1965:30) and they clashed with these people during the Difaqane (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:132). In many cases, however, San-Sotho relationships appear to have been strengthened at this time. The Phuti and Phetla, for example, were aided by San communities, who sheltered them when they fled the fighting. Makuoane, chief of the Phuti, and his son, Moorosi, moved southwards with their followers to escape the invasions. While there are different versions of the route taken by them and the events associated with this journey, the general details are given here from accounts provided by Nehemiah Moshesh, Joseph Orpen and Ellenberger and Macgregor.

Towards the onset of the Difaqane the Phuti and Phetla crossed the Senqu (Orange River) from the north and held a *pitso* (a general meeting of the clan) at which it was decided that they would split into two groups. One group, including Mokuoane and Moorosi, went to live with the Mpondomise under Myeki, grandfather of Mhlonhlo (Moshesh n.d.), who was reportedly of San descent (Orpen 1907). The other party went to stay with San living in the Herschel District (Moshesh n.d) who were occupying caves

along the Tele and Blekana Rivers (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:159) near the southern boundary of present-day Lesotho. The Phuti and Phetla lived by hunting and gathering at this time, as they had no cattle (Orpen 1907).

Those Phuti and Phetla who stayed with the San were "owned" and supported by them. The area was not settled by farmers at that time and there was plenty of game available, with the result that the San were able to provide the Phuti and Phetla with sufficient food. Tiring of living under the San, however, they secretly ran away, taking the one horse that the San possessed. After stealing cattle from a European farmer in the colony they appear to have taken these to a cave near Lady Grey where they were staying, but they were discovered here by the San with whom they had previously stayed. The San attacked them and claimed the cattle as "lords of the soil" (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:160). They drove off their cattle and returned to their caves, probably those along the Tele and Blekana, but were followed by two of the Phuti (Moshesh n.d.; Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:159-160).

In the interim, the group under Mokuoane had fallen out with the Mpondomise and had started to retrace their steps northwards. They appear to have gone to stay with the San at the Tele and Blekana Rivers, meeting up with their Phuti relations who had followed the San back to these caves. The two Phuti groups united and lived together at the cave near Lady Grey, living partly by hunting and gathering and partly by conducting cattle raids on black farmers in the Cape Colony (Moshesh n.d.; Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:160). The San who had previously taken their cattle also tried to claim the cattle which had been stolen by the Phuti from the colony, but the Phuti had by this time armed themselves with shields and peace was negotiated between the groups, on the understanding that the San submit to the Phuti (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:160). The Phuti subsequently appear to have stayed in a cave on a farm near Moshesh's Drift on the Kraai River, where they were reported to have subsisted on game hunted for them by the San, before moving to an area at the head of the Tele River (Orpen 1905).

According to Orpen, Mokuoane, father of Moorosi, took a second wife at this time. This woman was the daughter of a San chief called "Makoo" (Orpen 1907). It is possible, however, that Orpen was mistaken about the name of this San chief. While it appears that Orpen was referring to "Makoon", this San chief had been born near the Malareen (Harts) River, east of Kuruman, and was encountered there in 1820 by Campbell (1822:28-32). This is a considerable distance from the area occupied by the Phuti at this time. According to Sekese (1905c, 1924a), Mokuoane married the sister of the San chief Quu during the Difaqane and had a son by her called Khasoli. Quu was

living at "Nkuakhomo" at this time. It is possible that Quu was the son of Makoon, in which case Orpen's and Sekese's accounts are compatible. It appears more likely, however, that Orpen confused the similar sounding names of the chiefs Quu and Makoon and that Mokuoane in fact married the sister of Quu, who was unrelated to Makoon. Whatever the case, it is clear that at the time of the Difaqane, perhaps as a result of his being succoured by the San, the Phuti chief formalised his alliance with these people by marrying a San woman.

It is quite possible that intermarriage between the Phuti chiefs and the San had occurred before this time. Mokuoane's son, Moorosi, was reported to be descended from the San on his mother's side (Stow 1905: 229), and Orpen (1907) mentions that an *ancestor* of Moorosi's had a San wife, suggesting that intermarriage between the San and Phuti had occurred for a considerable period of time. Moorosi's San ancestry appears to have been evident in his physical appearance. He was very short (Stevens 1906) and was said by Major Hook, who met him, to be of San descent, small and yellow-skinned in appearance (Hook 1908:271).

The Koena also established relations with the San at the time of the Difaqane. When Moshoeshoe was forced to flee from Butha-Buthe to Thaba Bosiu in 1824, he found San living on Qeme and Qoaling mountains. Accounts of Moshoeshoe's encounters with these San communities have been recorded by Sekese (1907, 1924a), on whose material Dornan (1909) appears to have drawn. Among the San groups at Qeme when Moshoeshoe arrived in the area was a group under Quu, who by 1824 was known to be related to the Phuti by marriage, and it was with these San that Mokuoane traded tobacco and dagga (Sekese 1924a). According to Sekese (1924a) the Phuti united with Quu's San, and it is possible that the Phuti were living near Qeme at the time, trading with their San neighbours to whom they were related by marriage. Moshoeshoe attempted to befriend the Qeme San, giving them cattle including cows in calf. Instead of settling down and breeding these cattle, however, the San slipped away one night taking the cattle with them. They retreated to the mountains where they killed the cattle and ate them, after which they became brigands plundering the cattle of the Sotho, particularly those of Molapo (Sekese 1907). Dornan (1909:438) states that they eventually joined up with the San under Soai, whose fate is discussed later.

There are two different traditions which detail the marriage of Moshoeshoe to San women. According to Sekese (1907), the San who fled into the mountains left behind two young girls, one of whom was called Qeea. This girl was taken to Thaba Bosiu, where she became one of Moshoeshoe's wives and gave birth to a son. Although this

child had San features, he was considered very good looking (Sekese 1907), and this may reflect a general attitude towards people of San descent amongst the Sotho. The other San girl was given by Moshoeshoe to one of his subjects as a wife. Another tradition states that Moshoeshoe married two San women. According to this tradition, Moshoeshoe sent cattle in 1833 to "buy" the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society "baruti" (missionaries), Arbousset and Casalis, hoping that they would be induced to settle amongst his people. These cattle were stolen and eaten by a San hunter, and, in return for a guarantee that his cattle would not in future be stolen, and in return also for allowing two of this San man's daughters (one of whom was called Qea) to marry him, Moshoeshoe gave him permission to hunt elands in the Maluti (Norton 1910a; Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:234-235).

However he came to marry the San woman (or women), the fact that such marriages took place suggests that during the earlier part of the 19th century Moshoeshoe's relations with at least some San groups were cordial. Certainly, some San appear to have been anxious to keep on good terms with him. This is implied in a Sotho tradition, according to which San killed a Sotho hunter and wounded another with a poisoned arrow. When the San learned from the wounded man that he was a subject of Moshoeshoe they apologized for having shot him and saved his life by cutting away the flesh around his wound (Sekese 1912a). Some San groups, moreover, acknowledged Moshoeshoe's "ownership" of their communities, bringing him tribute of lion and "tiger" (leopard) skins (Moshesh 1880:285).

Aside from the influx of Nguni refugees onto the southern Highveld from c.1822, other groups had begun to cross the Orange River from the west and south, moving into territory occupied partly or wholly by San communities at about this time. Griquas and Korannas, followed by farmers from the Cape Colony, undertook hunting and raiding expeditions north of the Orange from about 1820 onwards (Wright 1971:31; Van Aswegen 1968:30), and the effect of these raids and the Zulu invasions was to greatly disrupt Sotho-San relations (Wilson 1982c:165). The combined raids and hunting expeditions of Griquas and Boers across the Orange had a profound effect on the San communities living in this area. Hunting was carried out on a scale hitherto impossible as a result of the extensive use of guns and horses, resulting in a rapid decrease in the amount of game. Game that was not shot out was forced northwards (Dornan 1909:437). The L.M.S. missionary, James Clark, remarked in 1830 on the noticeable decrease in game in the vicinity of Bethulie during the few years he had been at the mission station there (Pellisier 1956:181). Boers used the drought in the colony as an excuse to cross the Orange and seek out places for themselves in Trans Oranjia (Van der Merwe 1988).

They built temporary habitations (assisted, ironically, by the San), and then grazed their cattle at the fountains, forcing the San and the game into more arid areas (Pellisier 1956:173). These cattle also had a detrimental effect on the wild plant foods in the area, trampling the veld and destroying the "uintjies" (bulbous plants) on which the San subsisted (Pellisier 1956:180-181).

Between 1811 and 1823 a number of missions were established by the L.M.S. for San in the vicinity of the Orange River. These stations included Bethulie (1811), Toverberg, renamed Genadeberg in 1816 and the future site of Colesberg (1814), Hepzibah, north of Colesberg (1814) and Philippolis (1823) (Wright 1971; Sales 1975; Schoeman 1993). The missions, all of which had closed by 1833, provided places of refuge for San, many of whom were harassed by the Dutch farmers (Schoeman 1993), and San also appear to have sought refuge at these stations from attacks by black farmers in the area (H.A. 1877:84).

Despite the presence of the missionaries, the San at these missions and their outstations were not always safe from attacks by European farmers or Bantu-speakers. The wife of one of the missionaries at Toverberg, Maria Maritz, remarked: "The Bushmen, when they found they had the means of subsistence (as a result of the establishment of the missions), wished to recover their children, whom they had made over to the farmers when in a famished state, and some of the children themselves, hearing that the establishment was formed, wished to join it. This drew on the Institution the hostility of the Boors, who used to come with their wagons and carry off all the Bushmen with their women and children, and their representatives at length induced the Landdrost to break up the establishment" (Schoeman 1993:231, my bracketed addition). Other stations were raided by Bantu-speakers. In 1826 a "gang of kaffers" attacked an outstation of Philippolis, killing thirty-one "Bushmen" and stealing cattle that these people had accumulated. They managed to recover their cattle and took them to a San kraal just above the junction of the Caledon and the Orange (Pellisier 1956:169), where they were presumably less likely to be raided.

The closure of the missions, the attacks on San communities of the Great and Upper Riet Rivers and the Modder River by Griquas and Boers, who often enslaved the children they captured (Van der Merwe 1988:204, 342) and the effects of hunters armed with guns as well as the introduction of cattle on the game in the area all put severe pressure on the San in Trans Oranjia. Sotho in this area also felt this pressure as Griquas and Boers took over their land. Refugee San and Sotho communities fled to the highland areas previously occupied only by San, and it has been suggested that Sotho and San

were thereby brought into sharper conflict, thus speeding up the extinction of many San communities (Wright 1971:33). Interaction between some of these refugee San communities and particular Sotho groups appears to have been harmonious, however, and many San forced to move from Trans Oranjia from 1833 onwards placed themselves under Moorosi's protection (How 1962:13).

The Phuti are also known to have offered protection to refugee groups from other areas during the 1820s. The Qeme San who fled with the cattle given to them by Moshoeshoe are reported to have moved southwards into the territory of the Phuti (Sekese 1924a). When another San group, who possessed cattle, goats and sheep and were occupying an area in the mountains between present-day Maseru and Butha-Buthe were attacked by Griquas c. 1825, they left the area and fell under the authority of the Phuti chief, Setlu (Ambrose and Brutsch 1991:82). This man (probably the Phuti or Phetla chief Setlho referred to above) was living with his followers near the Genadeberg, south-east of present-day Zastron (Ambrose and Brutsch 1991:note 106) and was known to have San under his protection (Moshesh 1880:290).

By the 1830s the Phuti had submitted themselves to the authority of Moshoeshoe (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912: 195). That they had established close relations with the San and were involved in raids on European stock in co-operation with the San by this time is suggested by the tradition that Moorosi presented Moshoeshoe with his first horse in about 1829, stolen by one of the San under his protection (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:195). Moorosi's relations with the immigrant Boers were not nearly as cordial. The Phuti of Mokuoane and Moorosi were soon on bad terms with the European farmers and, aside from the relatively easy pickings to be had by the Phuti, it is likely that motives other than self-profit underlay some of Moorosi's raids on the cattle of the Boers. This is suggested by an incident that occurred c.1835 when Moorosi was away visiting Moshoeshoe at Thaba Bosiu. A Boer commando captured cattle belonging to Mokuoane at Bolepeletsa, east of the Tele River, and took Mokuoane prisoner. On the way to deliver him to prison they camped overnight at Buffels Vlei, tying the old man to a wagon wheel, but he was freed during the night by a San man (perhaps one of the San under his protection) and managed to escape (Orpen 1907). This incident is unlikely to have improved relations between the Phuti and the Boers and, as on this occasion, the Phuti depended heavily on the assistance of the San under their protection in future raids on these farmers.

### 3 PHUTI-SAN RELATIONS: C.1836 TO C.1872

The movement northwards of large numbers of Boers in 1836 as a result of the Great Trek had a major impact on San in the areas they occupied. Some of these San communities moved off into the remoter areas of the Maluti (Orpen 1874; Dornan 1909) as well as into Nomansland (East Griqualand), which appears to have continued to support large amounts of game until well into the latter half of the 19th century (Halford 1949:102; How 1962:39; Opperman 1987:34). Here they would have been able to continue hunting and gathering, but in contact, and perhaps trading, with black farming communities.

Little appears to be known of Phuti relationships with the San between 1835 and 1850. The number of San under the protection of the Phuti is likely to have increased dramatically, however, as a result of the incursion of Griquas, Koranna and frontier farmers into San territory in Trans Oranjia. The earlier willingness of the Phuti to accept San refugees, as well as their marital ties with the San, suggests that during these years displaced San communities continued to place themselves under their protection, and that they co-operated with the Phuti in raids on the stock of both European and black farmers. Moorosi was certainly known to be involved in many raids on the cattle of both European and black farmers after 1850. Between this date and his death in 1879 he accumulated a great number of cattle in this way (Stevens 1906), and he may well have conducted raids together with San under his protection before 1850.

One of Moorosi's brothers, Lisawana, was reported to command a band of Sotho, San and Khoi cattle thieves in 1855 (Vinnicombe 1976:67). In 1858, Lisawana, together with twelve San and two Sotho men, stole horses from the Colony and their trail was followed by a commando to Moorosi's kraal. Moorosi denied involvement in the theft, but was forced to provide guides to lead the investigating party to Lisawana. Instead of leading them to Lisawana, however, the commando were led on a circuitous journey over an extensive area of the Drakensberg while Lisawana and his band were sheltered by Thembu and Bhaca at the base of these mountains (Vinnicombe 1976:67).

Despite Moorosi's reputation as a protector of the San and his close links with those San who were under this protection, the Phuti were not immune to attacks by some San groups, probably those that occupied areas outside their territory. In about 1850, Moorosi was reported to have been making frequent raids on San who were living higher up the Orange River and "who were then numerous and troublesome to him" (Stevens 1906). The San leader, Mphaki (who, according to an informant of Paul Ellenberger,

was Sotho, but raised by the San [Statement of Rapiti Raisa, Ha Raisa, August 1959. Taped record lodged at Morija Museum Archives]), was forced by Phafoli, a brother of Moorosi, to move away from Qhoasing after the San had raided his cattle (How 1962:19). Both Widdicombe (1891:14) and Stow (1905:229) also remark that Moorosi was known to have attacked San bands.

Two statements made in 1869 to Captain Albert Allison, Commandant of the Natal Mounted Police, throw considerable light on relationships existing between some San communities and Moorosi's Phuti at this time (Vinnicombe 1976:91-92). One of Allison's informants was a subject of Moshoeshoe named Dinilape and the other a San woman taken prisoner by a party under Allison. Dinilape lived within Moorosi's territory, although he owed allegiance directly to Moshoeshoe rather than to Moorosi, and the San woman lived to the west of the upper reaches of the Mzimvubu.

According to these informants, many San lived with Moorosi's Phuti, and Moorosi had two San wives. The San staying with the Phuti lived in huts, possessed cattle and sheep and cultivated crops. Moorosi found the San useful for hunting elands, and one of his headmen, "Minnie-Minnie", hunted regularly with them. The San staying with Moorosi were protected by the Phuti and anyone doing them harm would have incurred the wrath of Moorosi. They, in turn, did not raid the Phuti. According to Dinilape, the San lived for part of the year in the hills and part of the year in villages with the Phuti. They often left for the hills at "picking" (ploughing) time because they were "too lazy" to do this hard work. The San woman informant's version of this movement between the hills and villages varied slightly from that of Dinilape. She remarked that her San community was divided into those who lived permanently in the hills and those, including their chief, who lived permanently amongst the Phuti - although the two sections of the band visited each other regularly. It was the "custom" of her San to divide themselves between the hills and the Phuti villages. These accounts clearly indicate the closeness of the Phuti's relationship with the San and suggest that the groups were integrated to a significant extent by this time.

By the time that Allison interviewed Dinilape and the San woman, Moorosi had already withdrawn up the Orange into the mountains after being attacked by the Boers during the last Sotho-Free State War in 1865 (Wright 1971:167). After 1868 San and Sotho frequently conducted raids together on the livestock of European farmers (Wright 1971:186) and between 1868 and 1870 most of the raids in Natal were conducted by combined parties of San and Phuti (Wright 1971:186). Allison's San informant confirmed that Moorosi was co-operating with the San in raiding farms in the colony

during this period, caves of the "hill San" being used as bases to launch raids into the Colony. Stolen cattle and horses were taken back to these caves and the horses divided between San and Phuti. All the cattle were taken back to the Phuti villages (Vinnicombe 1976:92), however, and it is possible that these cattle were divided amongst the Phuti and the San who stayed permanently in their villages.

#### 4 RELATIONS BETWEEN OTHER SOTHO GROUPS AND THE SAN C.1836 TO C.1872

##### A) C.1836 TO C.1858

Backhouse (1844:368) remarked on the presence of some San among the Sotho clans when he visited Moshoeshe in 1839, and other Sotho besides the Phuti also appear to have allowed San groups to live under their protection within their territories. A San community visited by Arbousset and Daumas (1846) subsisted largely by hunting and gathering, but were living in rough shelters close to the kraal of a Sotho chief. The chief possessed their confidence, and Arbousset and Daumas remarked that these Sotho sheltered the San in their huts when it rained. It is possible that this San community had fled the upheavals resulting from the occupation of the Orange Free State by the Boers and had placed themselves under the protection of the Sotho chief visited by Arbousset and Daumas. While on good terms with the Sotho, these San greatly feared the Boers. They told Arbousset and Daumas that the reason they did not build huts, keep cattle or cultivate crops was partly because they needed to be on the move following the game, but also because they needed to be mobile in order to escape attacks on them by Boers, who enslaved their children, raping the girls and sometimes castrating the boys (Arbousset and Daumas 1846:252).

While Moshoeshe and some of the other Sotho chiefs had established good relations with certain San groups in the 1840s, relations with other San groups were not always harmonious. In 1840 the San stole horses belonging to Moshoeshe near Qoqolosing while he was involved in negotiations with the Boer leader, Pretorius (Sekese 1912a). When Moshoeshe accompanied Arbousset on a journey from Thaba Bosiu to the sources of the "Malibamatso" River in 1840, it was partly to acquaint himself with the remoter areas of his domain where San raiders were believed to be based (Ambrose and Brutsch 1991:51). San had stolen horses from the Tlokoa chief, Masopo, the previous winter, and had taken them to the Maluti where they slaughtered them (Ambrose and Brutsch 1991:104). No San were encountered on the journey, but San bands inhabited the mountains, and Moshoeshe remarked to Arbousset that the Sotho were prevented

from establishing permanent settlements in the Maluti by the frequent raids conducted by these groups on the cattle of the Sotho (Ambrose and Brutsch 1991:58).

According to Maeder (1884), San raiders troubled the Sotho frequently, and Moshoeshoe, acting on complaints by his subjects of San depredations between Thaba Morena and Maphutseng, sent a party to mount an attack on the San raiders. Four prisoners were taken and delivered to Moshoeshoe's son, Letsie, and Vinnicombe (1976:8) has suggested that a drawing (by Maeder) of a San man, "Kingking", dating from 1844, may be of one of these prisoners. At Moshoeshoe's request, Maeder interviewed one of the San prisoners, perhaps "Kingking", concerning his reasons for raiding the Sotho. Both Maeder and this San man could speak "Afrikaans" and the interview was conducted in this language. It is worth recording in full for the light it throws on San attitudes to the Sotho and their concepts of private ownership of cattle, as well as their understanding of the Christian concept of sin: "I asked him in Afrikaans: 'Were you the thieves who stole the cattle of the Basotho?' He replied: 'It was us' - 'Why did you do it?' - 'It is how we live. We know no other way.' - 'Where did you learn to live like this?' - 'Our fathers lived in this way. How can we, their children, live differently when we subsist in this manner?' - 'Do you not see, when you steal the property of others and live on it, that you have done wrong and sinned?' - 'No, sir, we do not know about this; we only live in the manner in which we were raised by our fathers. As far as sin is concerned, we are not aware of it.' - 'Man, you know that you have been caught; you are in the power of Moshoeshoe. He can condemn you to death if he wishes. Are you not afraid you will be killed?' - 'Moshoeshoe can do as he likes; we are in his hands. We are not afraid to die.' - 'Are you not afraid that even God may be angry with you?' - 'We do not know God; we do not fear it.' - 'If I plead with Moshoeshoe not to kill you, will you not give up your way of living and work in my fields or serve Morena Moshoeshoe?' - 'To work is not our way. We do not like it. But, if we are forced to work, what can we do? We will work.' - 'Indeed, will you not run away?' - ' Yes, we will run away and return to our people.' - 'And when you have returned to them, what will you do?' - 'We will live the way we do' - 'By stealing?' - 'Yes.' - ' Oh! Surely it would be good for you to stop stealing and learn to live as other people do?' - 'For what reason? We live according to the ways of our fathers.' - ' What do your consciences say when you consistently steal that which belongs to others? Do your consciences not discipline you?' - ' I do not hear what you are saying. We are not disciplined.' - 'Oh! I see that you are people who are lost. Nevertheless you should know that God is present, He judges you, but He is merciful to those who repent.'" (Maeder 1884).

The four San prisoners were taken to Thaba Bosiu where Moshoeshoe sentenced them to work for him for the duration of their lifetimes. Three of them later escaped and only one remained with the Sotho. Maeder remarks that he would "perhaps relate his story", but no further mention is made of this man in his article.

#### B) C.1858 TO C.1872

When the Orange River Sovereignty, established in 1848, was handed over to the Boers by the Colonial government in 1854, boundaries between the new Orange Free State Republic and the Sotho were left undefined, and this was one of the factors which led to armed conflict between the Republic and the Sotho. Senekal's War was waged during 1858 and hostilities broke out again in the Seqiti War of 1865, which continued until 1868. These wars appear to have markedly affected San-Sotho relations in the eastern O.F.S.

By 1858 many San appear to have placed themselves under the protection of sympathetic Sotho chiefs, and the Sotho were accused by the Boers of co-operating with San who were stealing cattle from their farms (Van Aswegen 1968). San near Winburg, attacked in 1855 by a commando, fled to the territory of the Taung chief, Moletsane. Under pressure from the Boers, Moletsane recovered cattle stolen by the San during their retreat, but the fugitives managed to escape (Van Aswegen 1968:97-98). A commission, sent by the O.F.S. government to arrange peace at the end of Senekal's War in 1858, asked Moshoeshoe to act against San in his territory and to order his chiefs, and Moletsane in particular, to do the same (Van Aswegen 1968:98). After San had raided farms in the O.F.S. a later deputation pressured Moshoeshoe, Mopeli and Moletsane to prevent San within their territories, as well as San who were occupying areas in the O.F.S. formerly under their control, from stealing cattle from farms within the O.F.S.. The Boers suspected the Sotho chiefs of enlisting the help of San within their territories, but this was denied by the Sotho. They acknowledged that there were San living within their territory, but claimed not to be involved in cattle thefts with these groups (Van Aswegen 1968:100). Mopeli nevertheless told the Boers that he was unhappy about the San's occupying his territory, and, under pressure from the Boers, a Sotho deputation agreed to allow the European farmers to follow the spoor of stolen cattle into their territory (Van Aswegen 1968:100).

Fearing reprisals by the Boers, some Sotho chiefs acted against San living within their territory whom they had formerly protected. Poshuli, a brother of Moshoeshoe, who was known to have many San under his protection (Wright 1971:141; Van Aswegen

1968:101), attacked and killed a number of San at Litsueneng in 1862 (Cochet n.d.) and there were a number of other skirmishes between the Sotho and San in 1859 and 1860 (Cochet n.d.). Whether these skirmishes resulted from pressure placed by the Boers on the Sotho is not certain, but the San were now clearly seen by some Sotho chiefs as a liability. These chiefs had previously protected the San, who had, in turn, allied themselves with the Sotho against the Boers in the Free State wars - on one occasion helping Sotho besieged in a cave to beat off a Boer attack (Stow 1905:226-227). By 1860, however, joint commandos were being organized by Sotho and Boers against the San (Cochet n.d.). In the same year, Moshoeshoe agreed to act against the San and ensure that his chiefs did the same (Van Aswegen 1968:101).

San raids on farms in the O.F.S. had largely ceased by 1865 (Van Aswegen 1968:101). The Sotho retreated towards the mountains as the Boers occupied the eastern O.F.S., and some San communities under their protection probably accompanied them (Wright 1971:167; Van Aswegen 1968:102). San under the protection of Moletsane were forced to leave Mekoatleng after being attacked by the Boers (Norton 1910b:242). The mountain at Mekoatleng had provided a natural fortress for a number of powerful San bands for many generations and they occupied caves in the area until the Seqiti War in 1865, when they were attacked by a commando under Commandants Fick and Dreyer who used rifles, grenades and cannon against them in a fierce battle (Stow 1905). The Mekoatleng San subsequently moved to Qeme mountain and thereafter to Kolo mountain further towards the south (Dornan 1909:439).

The mountains were a natural refuge area for both San and Sotho, and many Sotho refugees occupied rock shelters after being expelled from the eastern O.F.S. by the Boers. According to Ellenberger (1953:243) this influx was at first accepted by the San, but fighting broke out when it became clear that some Sotho intended to occupy the caves permanently. It is probable, however, that relationships between San and Sotho were, in some cases, strengthened at this time as refugee San placed themselves under the protection of Sotho chiefs, such as Moorosi, who were sympathetic towards them. Some San were probably absorbed into these communities. Still other San refugees probably joined up with bands, such as that led by Soai, who were based in the mountain fastnesses and raiding the cattle of Sotho and European farmers. With the settlement of the Lesotho highlands after the Boer conquest of areas to the west of the Caledon River the San robber bands operating from the Maluti appear to have taken advantage of the presence of these communities and began to raid them rather than the European farmers in Natal (Wright 1971:169). This is suggested by the marked decrease in numbers of San raids on Natal during the 1860s (Wright 1971:169) and the increased intensity of raids by

San on the livestock of Molapo and his sons, Jonathan and Joel. These Sotho chiefs were greatly troubled by San raids led by Soai, and they organised a number of expeditions against his San (Sekese 1912a; 1912b), culminating in the raid of 1871 or 1872 in which Soai was killed by Sotho warriors.

Prior to the final raid on Soai, Joel and other Sotho chiefs had tried on a number of occasions to exterminate this San leader's band, but without success (Damane and Sanders 1974:169). On one of these occasions Soai appears to have been wounded in the neck and may have taken refuge with Moorosi (Damane and Sanders 1974:206). On another occasion, after horses were stolen by Soai from one of Moshoeshoe's chiefs, Joel was informed of this raid, but did not offer to help retrieve the horses. Moshoeshoe's son, Molapo, then asked his son, Jonathan, to mount an expedition against Soai. Jonathan located Soai's band and attacked them, but Soai was not captured as he was visiting Moorosi at the time (Sekese 1912a). According to a Sotho praise poem, Soai had "gone to his lover's (place), at Moorosi's" at the time of Jonathan's attack on his band (Damane and Sanders 1974:182, my bracketed addition). This suggests that Soai either had a San lover who was living amongst Moorosi's people or, more probably, that he had a Phuti lover. Some survivors of Jonathan's attack on the San left the Maluti and went to Harrismith and some joined the Phuti (Ellenberger 1953:258).

On his return from this raid, Jonathan passed Joel at the head of a party searching for Soai's San. Joel continued his expedition into the mountains where his men encountered three San, one of whom they traced to an area near Sehonghong Cave. They discovered this man immersed in a deep pool and breathing through a reed, but with his shoulder, apparently coated with red ochre, left exposed. He was shot and a beautiful belt removed from his waist. Joel gave it to his father, Molapo, and when the San women and children taken captive by Jonathan in the earlier raid saw the belt they identified it as belonging to Soai (Sekese 1924b). The Rev. J. Moteane gave an account of Soai's death to Dornan (1909) which is similar to that provided by Sekese, except that he ascribed Soai's death to Jonathan's men, unlike Sekese and Damane and Sanders (1974:206, note 2). Rev. Moteane also provided further details of Soai's ornaments, mentioning that Soai's belt was made of intricately-worked beads and ivory bracelets were removed from his arms. His body was reportedly cut up by the Sotho for "medicine" (Dornan 1909:449-450).

The San captured in Jonathan's initial raid were placed in an area away from the centre of Leribe by Molapo, who feared they would be attacked by the Sotho (Ellenberger 1953:255). The four San women escaped, but three were recaptured, one

being killed in the ensuing fight. One of the surviving San women died later of illness and the other two eventually managed to escape and evade capture (Damane and Sanders 1974:183, note 6). A San girl, named Qééa, was given to a vassal of Jonathan as a wife, on condition that the children of their marriage belonged to Jonathan (Ellenberger 1953:256) and another San prisoner, a young boy, became a herdboyc for Jonathan (Damane and Sanders 1974:183, note 9).

## 5 MOOROSI'S LAST YEARS - 1872 TO 1879

The defeat and death of Soai enabled the Sotho to expand into the highlands without fear of further attacks by the San (Sekese 1924b), and the cessation of San raids on European farms in Natal after 1872 (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976) may be attributable to Soai's death in about that year. While some San now sought refuge in the uninhabited areas of East Griqualand (Dornan 1909:450), others were probably sheltered by their allies and relatives - Moorosi's Phuti. Orpen's San informant, Qing, and his two wives, for example, had gone to live with Moorosi's son, Nqasha, after his band had been attacked and scattered in about 1872 (Orpen 1874:2). San were still numerous in the Quthing District until 1879, where they lived under the protection of Moorosi (How 1962:58) and these people may have included survivors of Soai's band, most of whom went to live under Moorosi (Ellenberger 1953:247).

Moorosi was soon to be defeated and killed by Colonial forces, however, depriving the San of their most powerful ally. One of his sons, Doda, was active in raids of the cattle of European farmers during the 1870s (Stevens 1906), perhaps aided by San living under the protection of the Phuti. He was eventually imprisoned for these thefts by the Colonial authorities. The Phuti broke open the gaol and released him, which resulted in a joint expedition of Colonial and Sotho forces, including the bitter enemy of the San, Jonathan, being mounted against Moorosi (Stevens 1906; How 1962:12-13; Damane and Sanders 1974:169). After a series of skirmishes with the advancing troops, Moorosi withdrew to a hill at the junction of the Quthing and Orange Rivers. The hill, which became known as Moorosi's Mountain, was well fortified, and Moorosi and his followers were besieged there for eight months (Stevens 1906; Tylden 1950; How 1962:13). San fought alongside the Phuti (Ellenberger 1953:248) and it appears that they helped him inflict heavy losses on the Colonial and Sotho troops near Fort Hartley (How 1962:14), presumably as they advanced towards Moorosi's mountain fortress further down the Orange. Moorosi's Mountain finally fell on the 20th of November 1879 and Moorosi was killed, marking the end of an era, not only for the Phuti but also for the Maluti San.

## CHAPTER SIX

### DISCUSSION

#### 1 EARLY INTERACTION BETWEEN S.E. SAN AND SOUTHERN NGUNI AND SOTHO COMMUNITIES

Alexander (1984:12) has suggested that during the early phases of a moving frontier, characterised by the movement of small groups or individuals from established farming communities into areas occupied by hunter-gatherers, relations between these farming pioneers and the hunter-gatherers they encountered are likely to have been amicable. This appears to have been the case in the Thukela Basin (Mazel 1987) and oral traditions of some southern Nguni and most southern Sotho groups point to the existence of symbiotic relationships between these groups and the San.

A number of Sotho traditions state that pioneer Sotho groups had close relations with the San, intermarrying with hunter-gatherers in areas newly occupied by them, and Schofield (1949:102), Walton (1956a) and Maggs (1976a:307) have remarked that mutual tolerance between early Sotho farmers and hunter-gatherers was probably a feature of early contact. The Sotho, in many cases, appear to have acknowledged and respected the aboriginal status of the San, referring to them as "the great people in their origin" (Sekese 1905b), and a Sotho praise recorded by Ellenberger (1953:67) refers to the San as "princes" who reign over all and "fill the earth". Sekese remarks that the frequent mention of the San in the Sotho initiation songs, which are of considerable antiquity, suggests that "from the beginning there was no separation between us" (1912a). This points to an even closer relationship than that of mutual tolerance - although some references to the San in Sotho initiation songs are less than complimentary. Similar close relationships, including intermarriage, were established between the San and early members of some southern Nguni groups, such as the Mpondomise and Thembu. There are a number of reasons why it would have been in the interests of these pioneer farming communities to have established symbiotic relationships with hunter-gatherers with whom they came into contact.

As Fox (1969) points out, it is important, in assessing the forms of hunter-gatherer - farmer relationships that may have developed, to differentiate between hunter-gatherer contact with early pre-industrial farming populations and contact with later colonial populations who, unlike the former, enjoyed a massive technological superiority

over the aboriginal communities. In the latter case, hunter-gatherers are likely to have been quickly subjugated or exterminated - as is evident from the histories of aboriginals in Australia, Tasmania, North and South America and other areas. In the case of less technologically advanced colonial farming communities, such as the southern Nguni and southern Sotho, the balance of power may, at least initially, have lain with the hunter-gatherers who occupied new territories settled by the farmers. This is likely to have encouraged early Nguni and Sotho farmers to establish harmonious relations with the San.

Certainly, the farmers did not enjoy anything like an overwhelming military superiority over the San. The fighting abilities of the San were greatly respected by both the southern Nguni and southern Sotho and, despite their lack of military organisation, the hunter-gatherers could more than hold their own in armed conflict with the immigrant groups. Marks (1972:74-75) remarks that the San are likely to have initially had the upper hand in clashes with the Xhosa, and she cites accounts by Sparrman and Burchell which clearly indicate the mixture of fear and respect evident in Xhosa attitudes towards San weapons and strategies of war. The English exploited the black farmers' fear of the poisoned arrows of the San and Ward (1848 II:40) remarked: "Among our allies employed with the army are 150 Bushmen, with poisoned arrows. The Kafirs have great dread of these new assegais, which are barbed, and cannot be extracted without additional injury to the wounds they inflict".

Some Bantu-speakers used the weapons of the San in preference to those which they traditionally employed. Early nomadic Xhosa clans are said to have acquired bows and arrows which they were taught to use by the San (Webb and Wright 1976:98). A "Betjuan prince" encountered by Lichtenstein at the beginning of the 19th century possessed a San bow and quiver full of arrows. He told Lichtenstein that the "Betjuans" employed these weapons against the San because they always came off worst in any conflict with them if they were armed only with assegais. Burchell (1953 II:142) remarked, moreover, that the "arrow is so purely a Bushman manufacture, that the surrounding tribes, often procure them from this nation ..." and a trade in arrows had developed between the San and the "Bachapin". According to Barrow (1801:201) the "Kaffirs" were not as successful in their attacks on the San as were the European colonists, since the "Bosjesmans care as little for a Hassagaai as they dread a musquet". As long as the San were able to maintain a distance between themselves and hostile farmers they appear to have been able to maintain the upper hand in their battles with them (Stow 1905: 207).

Aside from the possible military superiority of the San over the farmers, there would have been other reasons for southern Nguni and southern Sotho pioneers to have established harmonious relations with the San. Hunter-gatherers would have had the advantage of intimate knowledge of the local environment, and, as such, they are unlikely to have been subject to the frequent reversals of fortune which were probably experienced by farming communities unfamiliar with new environments. Uncertainties associated with the exploitation of such environments would have been particularly pronounced in agriculturally marginal areas, such as the sourveld of the Drakensberg foothills, which were occupied at later dates when pressure on land increased. The establishment of harmonious relations with hunter-gatherer communities would have provided farmers with a "safety net" during periods of crisis, such as when crops failed or when they were attacked by other groups. If they were able to enlist the help of local hunter-gatherer communities at these times their chances of survival would have been greatly increased.

Hunter-gatherers are likely to have been useful to the farmers as a source of herds for their cattle, and they would also have been able to assist them when they supplemented their subsistence base by means of hunting and gathering. It is likely that most farming communities were dependent to a greater or lesser extent on hunting and gathering for their survival, both in earlier and in later times. 16th century Nguni farmers appear to have been heavily dependent on hunting and gathering for subsistence (Derricourt 1977:185), as Hall (1988:139) has suggested may have been the case for early first millennium A.D. farmers. While the expansion of Sotho farmers into the southern Highveld may have been facilitated by increased dependence on livestock as a subsistence resource (Hall 1987a:47), the development of hunting and gathering skills would also have made the occupation of such areas viable. For this they would have relied heavily on the expertise and knowledge of the local environment possessed by hunter-gatherers.

The traditions of a number of Sotho groups confirm that these groups were largely dependent on hunting and gathering for long periods after arriving on the southern Highveld (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912), and they appear to have been assisted in these activities by local hunter-gatherer communities. Nguni traditions also refer to the importance of hunting to early farming communities and an account of early Zulu subsistence and settlement patterns reported to James Stuart may have been typical of many early, and some later, southern Nguni and southern Sotho farming communities: "The ancient practice was for an *umuzi* site to be (occupied) for one or two years and then to go on to where eland are found" (Webb and Wright 1979:134). The San are

known to have accompanied the Sotho and Nguni on hunts (Moshesh 1880; Otto 1908; Vinnicombe 1976:92), and according to tradition they assisted pioneer Phuti "to view the land", acting as guides for them in the areas with which they were unacquainted (Sekese 1905a). We can reasonably expect, therefore, that these services which the San were able to provide would have been in demand by farmers, particularly during early periods of settlement when farmers moved into unfamiliar territories.

The potential benefits to many pioneer farmers of forming close relations with their hunter-gatherers neighbours are thus likely, in many cases, to have outweighed any benefits that may have resulted from attempts to subdue these people. Not only would they probably have been unable to assert hegemony over local San groups, but they may well have had no such intention, realising that their attempts to settle and farm in an area would be more likely to succeed if their relationships with local hunter-gatherers were characterised by co-operation rather than conflict. While land remained plentiful and the farmers and their cattle few in number, hunter-gatherers are likely to have been prepared to offer them the help they needed in coming to terms with an unfamiliar and sometimes hostile environment.

Maggs (1980a:11, my bracketed addition) has remarked that "if contact between the E.I.A.(Early Iron Age) way of life and the local L.S.A. communities led to a positive interaction of mutual benefit, rather than competition and perhaps resistance, the E.I.A. would have been able to expand to its ecological limits much more rapidly". Similar ideas have been expressed by Dennell (1985) and can be usefully employed to model the movement of early farmers into hunter-gatherers' territories, such as the southern Highveld and the areas at the base of the Drakensberg. We need to take into account the possibility that, rather than representing an obstacle to early farmer movement into new territories, hunter-gatherers in many cases actively assisted farmers to establish themselves in new areas, and that the absence of these hunter-gatherer communities may in fact have made such settlement unviable in some cases.

The end of the moving frontier, marked by the inability of farming communities to continue moving into new territories and the intensified use of occupied land (Alexander 1984:19), would have been characterised by a number of changes in relations between the south-eastern San and farmers. As Alexander (1984) points out, a wide spectrum of relationships, ranging from complete independence of farmer and hunter-gatherer communities from each other to the total absorption of hunter-gatherers and farmers into each others' societies, would probably have developed. The forms which such relationships took would have depended on many factors, including the sizes of the

various farming communities, the character of local leaders and the amount of cattle the farming communities possessed (Wright 1971:12).

The attitude of the San towards the livestock of the immigrant groups is likely to have been crucial. While the San were clearly able to distinguish between wild and domestic animals, there is evidence which suggests that they had different conceptions from Bantu-speakers regarding property rights attached to these animals. A San informant interviewed in 1834 by Andrew Smith implied that his people considered the cattle of the farmers in his area (near Thaba Nchu) as the common property of San and farmers, "to be possessed by whoever could secure them" (Lye 1975:130). The following conversation between Rev. Pellisier of the P.E.M.S. mission at Bethulie and a San man who had stolen cattle from the missionaries appears to confirm the existence of these attitudes towards farmers' cattle. The conversation was recorded by Rev. Francois Maeder. Pellisier asked him: 'Where did (the cattle) go?' - 'The Moroa replied, saying: 'They went into my stomach.' - 'What have you done, man? You ate something which was not yours.' - 'Indeed, is a cow not edible? How can you be surprised, sir, that I ate it, since I was hungry?' - 'You should eat what belongs to you, not what belongs to others.' - 'Oh, that may be the custom for you Europeans. Our custom is different. We slaughter where a thing that can be slaughtered is present. We do not ask who it belongs to. God created things as food for people. How can we stop eating? Why should things created by God be the cause of blame?' At this the minister began to complain about the Moroa's statements and he said to himself: 'I do not see that these people of mine can be helped.' (Maeder 1885).

While the comments of Smith's and Maeder's San informants may suggest that the San simply stole any cattle present in the areas they occupied, this is unlikely to have occurred while relations between them and farming communities were amicable. Contact is likely to have been established with the San soon after farmers moved into their new territories, and they would no doubt have taken the first opportunity to indicate to the San that they should not kill domestic animals as they were used to doing with game. Any deterioration in relationships between the San and farmers, however, is soon likely to have been followed by reprisals in the form of cattle raids. The San took to stealing the cattle of the Dutch after experiencing harsh treatment at the hands of these farmers (Somerville 1979:67), and this was probably also the case with respect to the intrusion of black farmers into their territories.

A deterioration in relations between some San and black farming communities is likely to have resulted from increased pressures being placed on the natural resources of

areas occupied by farmers and hunter-gatherers. One of the causes of such increased pressure would have been the increasing numbers of cattle in hunter-gatherers' territories and the effect that these animals had on wild plant foods. As Hart and Hart (1986:32) have remarked with respect to the movement of farmers into the central African forests, these people "brought not only agricultural foods but also new environments". The account by James Clark of the rapid deterioration of the veld and the destruction of bulbous plants, on which the San partly subsisted, after the introduction of large numbers of cattle into Trans Oranja has already been cited (Pellisier 1956:181). The deleterious effect that farming communities have had upon the natural environment has also been commented upon by other authors (Hitchcock 1982:245-246; Maggs 1984:35; Biesele et al 1989:120; Solway and Lee 1990:118). Particularly threatening to the lifeway of hunter-gatherers would have been the expropriation of water holes by farmers in order to provide watering points for their cattle, and the consequent movement of game into other areas. That such processes followed upon the introduction of substantial numbers of cattle into hunter-gatherers' territories is confirmed by James Clark's account of the expropriation of fountains in Trans Oranja by European farmers and the subsequent decline in numbers of game in the area, forcing the San into other areas (Pellisier 1956:173, 180-181).

While it is likely that the San were initially unaware of the effects of cattle on the environment and their impact on the game in the area, as these effects increased in intensity so would the San's resentment at farmer intrusions. The process is well-illustrated by remarks made by an old San man to Andrew Smith in 1835: "According to his account ... before the time of his birth, parties of Bituanas had been established in the country where he was born; and had for some time after their arrival in it lived in tolerable friendship with the Bushmen. The Caffres, however, not continuing satisfied with the proportion of country of which the Bushmen were disposed to allow them possession, began to seize additional parts, particularly those where the strongest springs existed. Such proceedings soon irritated the Bushmen and caused them not only to war against, but to plunder the intruders of their cattle, which occasioned the retirement of the Caffres to their old country ... " (Lye 1975:178).

The theft of Rharhabe's favourite ox by the San (Brownlee 1923:182) is likely to have followed such unneighbourly behaviour, and a similar pattern of events probably occurred in areas where black farmers ignored the land claims of established hunter-gatherer communities and disturbed the environment to the point where it impacted significantly upon the lifeway of these communities. While it has been suggested that San raids on the cattle of black farmers only become common after the Difaqane

(Campbell 1987:57, 96), there is considerable evidence, some of which I have already cited in chapter 4, that the San conducted raids on the cattle of black farmers both before and after the Difaqane. In the light of the statement by Smith's San informant, we might expect that such raids were initiated by unwarranted expansion by certain chiefs into San territory coincident with increases in the population of farmers and their cattle. Those groups, such as the Mpondomise, Thembu and several Sotho clans, who had formed close relationships with the San at an early stage and had consolidated these relationships through intermarriage are likely to have been more careful about ignoring the claims of the San with whom they were allied, and their relations with the hunter-gatherers remained amicable into the 19th century.

Pressures consequent upon agricultural expansion would also have impacted on relations between San bands forced to compete for resources, as well as on inter-band relations. The information which Andrew Smith obtained from the old San informant in 1835 is again directly relevant: "We learned ... that before his time the Bushmen were much less disposed to hostilities than they have been since ... In the early time ... it was not uncommon for the inhabitants of one district to repair (to other territories), with the permission of the owners of another, in quest of support when the want of timely rains had rendered their own (territories) comparatively unproductive, but now sanction ... was never to be obtained, and if it was otherwise attempted it would be a certain source of war. This change he ascribed partly to the invasion and settlement of other tribes who had so circumscribed the Bushman territories that every community found it necessary to guard each district with jealous care, finding it scarcely adequate to the supply of its own wants, and partly to new causes of enmity arising out of divided feelings in respect of the policy to be adopted towards the neighbouring tribes" (Lye 1975:180, my bracketed additions).

The statement by this San man, who was well acquainted with the early history of the area (Lye 1975:178), throws considerable light on the processes of social transformation experienced by some San communities subject to later expansions of farming communities within their territories and supports Hall's (1986:48) observation that "archaeological and historical evidence points to interesting departures from the foragers' traditional system of mutual reciprocity within groups and regional exchanges between groups, and the reinforcing effect this has on maintaining the economic and social systems". It is clear that the extended presence of agriculturists had radically affected the social organisation of some San bands in these areas. The breakdown of systems of generalised reciprocity which allowed "storage of social obligations rather than storage of food in the larder or on the hoof" (Wiessner, cited in Spielmann

1986:290) is likely to have considerably hastened the demise of those San groups unable or unwilling to develop similar systems of mutual insurance with agriculturists.

## 2 TRADING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOUTH-EASTERN SAN AND BLACK FARMING COMMUNITIES

Under increasing pressure to adapt to the changed landscape, some south-eastern San groups are likely to have adopted a range of new lifeways, and a great variety of hybrid societies with traits taken from both farmer and hunter-gatherer economies and societies probably developed. Farming communities are also likely to have had to adapt to increased pressure on the land so that "pure" hunter-gatherers and "pure" farmers came to represent to the extremes of a range of societies with a wide spectrum of mixed cultures and economies (Alexander 1984). Those hunter-gatherer societies that survived longest in one form or another were probably those that developed relationships with farmers based on trade in goods and services, including "symbolic labour". By intensifying these relationships, many hunter-gatherer communities would have been able to survive, albeit with greatly modified social structures, for a considerably longer period than would have been possible than if they had been forced to depend solely on hunting and gathering for subsistence. The history of these trading relationships between San hunter-gatherers and black farmers, and between the south-eastern San and the southern Nguni and Sotho in particular, is examined in this section.

All the hunter-gatherer communities outside the study area whose relationships with farming communities have been surveyed in the previous chapters, have been, and are, involved in trading relationship with farmers. In most cases these relationships have existed for a long time, connecting the hunter-gatherers, generally in the role of primary producers, to extensive trading networks. Similar relationships appear to have characterised interaction between some south-eastern (and south-western) San groups and their farmer neighbours, and it is probable that these relationships provided the means by which the south-eastern San and black farmers "introduced themselves" to each other. As is the case with other hunter-gatherer groups, the establishment of these relationships probably also paved the way for exchanges in the spheres of culture, religious ideology and ritual practice. Dagga (*Cannabis sativa*), tobacco, domestic carbohydrate and ivory were among the commodities traded. Trade in these goods is discussed below.

## A) EXCHANGE OF FARMER PRODUCTS - DAGGA, TOBACCO AND DOMESTIC CARBOHYDRATE.

Dagga and tobacco were major items in the trade between black farmers and southern African hunter-gatherers, including the south-eastern San. Dagga was probably originally introduced into southern Africa by Arab traders. They acquired it in India and traded it to Bantu-speakers on the east coast of Africa, from where it passed into trading networks extending into the interior (Du Toit 1974:269). Smoking of "bangi" long preceded the arrival of Europeans in southern Africa (Du Toit 1980:22), but tobacco, which is of New World origin, appears to have been introduced later, "Soaquas" encountered in 1660 by Jan Danckaert were unfamiliar with the practice of tobacco smoking (Thom 1958:318). There are a number of accounts of dagga's being smoked or chewed shortly after Van Riebeeck's arrival at the Cape, although some of these reports may refer to substances other than *Cannabis sativa* or to *Cannabis sativa* mixed with other narcotic herbs and roots (Du Toit 1980:21).

The importance of dagga in exchange relations between the Xhosa and Khoi has been discussed by Harinck (1969) and it was of equal importance in exchange relations between black farmers and the San. Numerous accounts by early European travellers attest to the San's great fondness for, and addiction to, dagga (Sampson 1993). Along with tobacco, it appears to have been the most common form of currency utilised by Europeans, Khoi and Bantu-speakers to obtain goods and services from the San, and it is clear that the San placed a very high value on these substances. Burchell (1953 II:29) records that one of his guides traded less than two ounces of tobacco for a beautiful leopard-skin kaross worn by a member of a San band encountered by his party, and Andrew Smith reported that starving San whom he encountered were prepared to exchange the last of their food for tobacco (Lye 1975:132). According to Lewis Leslie, an Assistant Surgeon to colonial forces stationed near the Orange River, dagga was smoked by San when they were unable to procure food: "When possessing plenty of *dakka* they can smoke and sleep for several days and nights without eating" (Leslie 1828).

Both the southern Sotho and southern Nguni supplied the San with dagga as gifts or in exchange for hunter-gatherer commodities. As has already been mentioned, the early Koena chief, Kali, acquired land from a "Moroa" in exchange for dagga and was thereafter known as Monaheng. According to a Sotho tradition, the Sotho gave presents of dagga to the San in early times (Sekese 1912a), and the San expected a present of dagga when visited by the Sotho (Ellenberger 1953:65). The fondness of the San for

dagga and their constant requests for it was a recurrent theme in accounts of the San provided to me by Sotho informants. One informant remarked that if Sotho wanted to obtain medicines from the San they would smoke or burn dagga near a forest in which the San were staying. The San would be attracted by the smell of the burning dagga and come out of the forest, bringing their medicines with them (Statement of Thembani Thembani, 3/3/1992, Alwyn's Kop).

San encountered by Gxuluwe, a subject of the Xhosa chief Rharhabe, are said to have asked these men for dagga (Williams 1983:161) and San traded ivory for dagga and cattle with the Xhosa in the 19th century (Peires 1982:24, 97). The San were reported to provide feathers, game and other bush products in exchange for tobacco and dagga (Dornan 1925:122). The association between San and dagga is, moreover, still evident in the traditions and ritual practices of the Nguni. Informants interviewed within the last few years remarked that the San enjoyed smoking dagga, and one of these informants, a Zulu diviner, added that the San were closely associated with dagga smoking (Prins 1992:12). An Nguni ritual which involves the use of dagga to attract the San, recently witnessed by Prins and me in the Transkei, is still performed. In the course of this ritual, dagga is burnt within a painted rock shelter in the belief that the fumes attract the spirits of the San who once lived in that place.

According to a Sotho chief, an informant of Victor Ellenberger (1953:67), the San did not like to sing unless they had smoked dagga beforehand, and a Sotho informant remarked that the San always smoked dagga before dancing (Statement of Liphapang Mojaki, 5/8/1992, Mount Moorosi). It is possible that the San used dagga, acquired through trade with Bantu-speakers and others, to attain altered states of consciousness involving trance. Dagga is sometimes used for this purpose by the Kalahari San. The statements by Sotho informants cited above suggest that this may have been a common practice over a wide area, and may even have occurred from the time that dagga was first acquired by the San. The influence of dagga may thus be reflected in the imagery of those San paintings which symbolise the experiences of trance.

It seems that, in some cases, dagga was cultivated specifically in order that it might be traded with the San. Thompson was surprised to find Dutch farmers in the Graaf Reinet District growing dagga, which they seldom used themselves, and concluded that it was grown "as an inducement to retain the wild Bushmen in their service ... most of these people being extremely addicted to the smoking of `dacha'" (Thompson 1967:52). The mother of the Phuti chief, Makuoane, grew tobacco and dagga to trade for skins and feathers with the San (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:27). The practice of

cultivating dagga for trade with the San has been observed, moreover, amongst Bantu-speakers in south-western Angola. These people do not smoke dagga themselves but give it to the neighbouring !Kung (Estermann 1976).

It appears from these accounts that dagga was cultivated by both Europeans and Bantu-speakers specifically for the purposes of trade with the San or as gifts for them. Whether the San's addiction to dagga and tobacco was actually encouraged is a moot point, but Thompson's account suggests that this may have been the case, with respect to European farmers at least. Certainly the prospect of acquiring these substances would have been a powerful inducement to hunter-gatherers addicted to them to provide much needed labour for farmers - something which they often appear to have been unwilling to do (Vinnicombe 1976:92). In this sense it is possible that the trade in tobacco and dagga may have played a major role in inducing those San who had elected to retain a degree of independence from farming communities to provide services to these communities.

Another important commodity which southern Sotho and southern Nguni farmers had to offer the San was domestic carbohydrate. The survey of non-San hunter-gatherers in regular contact with farmers suggests that the exchange of goods and services by these groups in return for domestic carbohydrate is a feature of most, if not all, trade between hunter-gatherers and farmers. It has also been suggested that such exchanges were essential if the nutritional requirements of hunter-gatherers were to be properly met (Hart and Hart 1986; Speth 1990). The south-eastern San did not occupy tropical rain forests, which are particularly poorly endowed with calorie-rich plant foods, and they may have been able to obtain sufficient carbohydrate from wild plant foods, but they are nevertheless known to have traded for carbohydrates with black farmers. The San traded for "corn" with the Mpondo in the early 19th century (Steedman 1835:280), and the Sotho provided the San with sorghum, particularly unripe sorghum, which they preferred (Sekese 1912a).

While domestic carbohydrate may not have been an essential dietary requirement of the south-eastern San, they could well have developed a strong liking for it as well as for other farmer foods such as milk - according to Stanford's Thembu informant, Silayi, San visiting the kraals of black farmers asked for milk (Macquarrie 1962:34). This is likely to have resulted in the production of a surplus of bush products which could be exchanged for domestic foods, as well as dagga and tobacco, with black farmers, and may have initiated the development of hunter-gatherer economic systems geared specifically towards trade, similar to those observed outside the study area and surveyed in chapter 2.

## B) EXCHANGE OF HUNTER-GATHERER GOODS AND SERVICES

One of the most important commodities which the San had to offer Bantu-speakers was undoubtedly ivory, and the involvement of San groups in the ivory trade is documented from shortly after the arrival of Van Riebeeck at the Cape. Pieter Cruijthoff encountered San at the Olifants river in 1661 who promised to bring him honey and ivory. According to Cruijthoff they had "elephant tusks which they exchanged with the Cabonas, and these Cabonas in turn had given them in barter to the Portuguese" (Thom 1958: 381). The Cabonas or "Chabonas" were the Xhosa (Harinck 1969:163). It thus appears that, from at least the 17th century, the southern Nguni were acting as middlemen in ivory trade networks linking Portuguese traders on the east coast to the interior and as far as the west coast of southern Africa. The primary producers in this trade were probably the San.

It is likely that the San had been involved in this trade for some years before they were encountered by Cruijthoff. By 1552 a ship was expected annually at Lourenco Marques to buy ivory (Wilson 1982b:78) and from 1600 onwards there are references in the historical literature to trade in metals, furs and ivory (Wilson 1979:56). A regular trade in ivory between the Portuguese and local populations had been established in northern Natal by the mid-16th century (Derricourt 1977). The Khoi are also known to have traded in ivory at an early date. They were bartering small quantities of ivory from at least 1624, and by the 1670s they were hunting elephants with guns (Marks 1972:61). Cruijthoff's observations, cited above, suggest that the San may well have been involved in this trade, probably over a very wide area. Such trade is likely to have intensified greatly with the arrival of European traders and hunters in the south-east during the course of the 18th century.

English and Dutch traders and hunters preceded the arrival of European farmers in the south-eastern areas by many years. Increasing numbers of trading and hunting expeditions were organised from the Cape Colony into the territory of the southern Nguni and the primary aim of these people was to obtain ivory for trade. An English galley was trading beads and copper rings for ivory off the coast south of Delagoa Bay in 1714 (Derricourt 1974:41) and, as demand for ivory grew, this ship and others like it would have received their supplies from European traders and hunters operating in the interior. Elephant hunters had penetrated beyond Thembuland by 1736, and by the 1770s there was a regular trade in ivory in the Ciskei region (Derricourt 1974:41). It is likely

that at least some San groups were providing ivory for this trade through Bantu-speaker middlemen, and they may also have acted as guides for European hunters.

The increasing numbers of permanent European settlers and traders at the Cape and the moving of the frontier eastwards opened this trade to extensive commercial markets and stimulated demand for ivory on an unprecedented scale (Wright 1971:34). Smaller Xhosa groups squeezed between encroachment by larger clans to the east and European settlers in the west became heavily involved in the ivory trade towards the end of the 18th century. "In order to survive both politically and economically ... these groups were forced to expand that sector of their economy which gave them access to the commodity exchange market of the Cape Colony by hunting and trading across the frontier - ivory being the principal article of exchange" (Kallaway 1982:144). The fact that San were exchanging ivory with the Xhosa more than one hundred years before this time strongly suggests that they may have acted as primary producers in this trade, supplying the Xhosa with ivory which was subsequently bartered in the Colony, and trade in ivory between the San and other groups, including the Nguni, is known to have continued until well into the 19th century (Steedman 1835; Lister 1949).

It is possible that Sotho and Nguni chiefs obtained ivory and skins for the commercial trade from the San by strict enforcement of customary rules of tribute, which required their subjects to surrender the skins and, in the case of elephants, tusks of large game to the chiefs. Sotho chiefs are known to have received tribute of skins from the San (Moshesh 1880), and it appears that Nguni chiefs, such as Mandela, also received tribute of skins, as well as ivory from San in their territories (Cape GH 8/23:386, statement of Hans Lochenburg). With increasing pressure being placed by European traders on chiefs to supply ivory for the trade, San living within the territories of these chiefs may have come under pressure to supply chiefs with ivory over and above the customary requirements of tribute. Certainly the ripple effect of such market pressures was felt on hunter-gatherers in Central Africa, where, at the time of colonisation, trade in ivory was imposed upon villagers - who in turn forced Aka hunter-gatherers to participate in this trade via exchange relations with them (Bahuchet and Guillaume 1982:199). It is also possible that, as trade in skins and ivory increased and as the opening of European markets led to an increase in value of these goods, Nguni customs respecting the aboriginal status of the San and their prior claim to game (Backhouse 1844:273) may have been discontinued in favour of the relations of the market place.

The balance of power within these trading relationships may, however, have lain with the San in many cases. Gordon (1984) has detailed the manner in which San of the

Kaukaveld were able to maintain control over the trade in copper in that region during the 19th century. We might expect some San groups, possessing the advantage of intimate knowledge of the remoter areas where elephants were to be found, to have used this advantage to ensure that they were not exploited and to maintain control over the sources of ivory - in the same way that San of the Kaukaveld controlled the sources of the copper they mined. This would have ensured that they were rewarded to their own satisfaction, even if such rewards were below the market value of the ivory they traded.

While other products, including honey, wax, feathers and arrows were also traded by the San, perhaps the most important resource they had to offer besides ivory was their labour. The San would have been potentially valuable to farmers as a source of labour and represented the most obvious source of recruitment for this purpose, particularly when settlements were being established and virgin ground had to be cleared for fields. The provision of labour to farmers by hunter-gatherers is a characteristic feature of many of the relationships established between hunter-gatherers and farmers outside the study area, and we might expect the south-eastern San, in some cases, to have provided these services to black farmers. Some Sotho traditions state that the San were employed as shepherds and the Taung chief, Moletsane, was raised by San who were looking after the cattle of the Taung at an outlying cattle post (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912). There appears to be little evidence, however, as to whether the San herded the cattle of the Nguni. Whether San living independently of farming communities helped the Nguni and Sotho to plough, sow and harvest is also unclear, but the remarks of the captive San man interviewed by Maeder, as well as those of Allison's informant, Dinilape, suggest that this was not a common practice before the San were fully absorbed into farming communities. There is little information presently available relating to this question, however, and further research on San-farmer relations needs to be undertaken before the issue can be resolved.

### 3 INTERACTION DURING THE DIFAQANE

The Difaqane and the upheavals associated with this period are likely to have brought about a number of changes in relationships between the south-eastern San and the southern Nguni and Sotho, as well as to have reinforced certain patterns of interaction that were already well established. At times of great political upheaval and associated ecological crisis, such as that which characterised the time of the Difaqane, hunter-gatherers are generally in a better position to survive these crises than farming communities. Both the crops and livestock of farmers are highly vulnerable at such times, whereas the flexibility and mobility of hunter-gatherers and their lack of

possessions which can be appropriated by refugee groups would probably have ensured that they escaped the main brunt of the Difaqane struggles. They were nevertheless affected in a number of ways by the widespread conflict and were unable to completely avoid being caught up in the struggles.

At a time when practically no southern Nguni or Sotho community was safe from attack by other groups it would have been important to foster good relations with the San. Farming communities that forged alliances with hunter-gatherers would have been able to depend on them for help in the form of provision of shelter and food as well as military assistance. An example of this dependence is the reliance of villagers on the Efe pygmies during the period of great political and social upheaval associated with the Simba rebellion in north-eastern Zaire. During this time villagers took to the forest and were supported by Efe communities, who supplied them with wild yams, fish and game (Wachle 1986:399-401), and in times of ecological crisis such as drought Kavango farmers were supplied with wild foods by their "little friends", the !Kung (Gordon 1992).

Similar relationships were established between the south-eastern San and some black farmers during the Difaqane. The Phuti were sheltered by the San and supplied with wild foods and game by them, and other Sotho communities forced to depend on hunting and gathering to survive were taught techniques of hunting by the San. San archers were enlisted by some Sotho groups, fighting alongside them in the internecine wars waged at this time. The recruitment of hunter-gatherers as soldiers in times of war was not restricted to that known to have occurred during the Difaqane. Contingents of hunter-gatherer archers supported farming kingdoms during the Maratha wars of the 17th and 18th centuries in India (Allchin 1977:136) and Efe archers fought alongside villagers to whom they were allied during the wars of the later 19th century in the Congo (Wachle 1986:396). The fighting skills of the San and the demand for San "mercenaries" are likely to have been exploited by San groups, and these skills probably represented one of their most valuable assets, ensuring their continued survival in the interstices of black farming society.

We can expect that relations between the San and farmers who depended on their assistance during the Difaqane would generally have been strengthened at this time, although this would not always have been the case. Many farming communities who lost their cattle and crops, such as the Mpondomise (Beinart, cited in Wilmsen 1989:85) and Phuti, were forced to hunt and gather to survive. Some, like the Phuti, joined up with San communities, and it is quite possible, in view of their long history of intermarriage with the San, that Mpondomise groups did the same. As was the case with Efe hunter-

gatherers who sheltered villagers during the Simba rebellion and were left with considerable credit with the farmers in later times (Wachle 1986:403), relations between the San and the farmers they sheltered or assisted with hunting and gathering during the Difaqane are likely to have become very close. Some farmers may have elected to continue living with the San after the Difaqane, a strategy which may be reflected in the composition of the band of San and "Caffres" encountered by Bain near the Mzimvubu during the late 1820s (Lister 1949:118).

In all these cases we can expect intermarriage between the farmer and hunter-gatherer communities to have occurred, and we know that the Phuti intermarried with the San at this time. In those cases where farmers sheltered by the San returned to their land to settle again, they are likely to have returned the favour when San communities came under pressure during the course of the 19th Century as hunting and gathering became unviable. Assistance rendered to farmers by San earlier in the century is likely to have stood them in good stead when they were later forced to depend on farming communities for their subsistence and when they elected, or were compelled by circumstances, to integrate with the Sotho and Nguni. Barriers to such integration are likely to have been least amongst those farming groups who were supported by the San during the Difaqane, and it is probably into these communities that many south-eastern San were absorbed during the 19th century.

#### 4 INTERACTION AFTER THE DIFAQANE

The combined effects of increasing numbers of hunters armed with guns as well as the demands made on natural resources during the Difaqane as farmers resorted to hunting and gathering resulted in great shortages of game (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:222) and some of those Sotho groups that were not succoured by the San resorted to cannibalism (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912). The later acquisition of horses and firearms by the San may, moreover, have resulted in their undermining their own subsistence base through the hunting of game on a scale far in excess of their subsistence needs. Mbuti involved in the commercial meat trade of the southern Ituri forest, for example, destroyed much of the potential of the area for subsistence by over-hunting (Wachle 1986:404) and it is possible that some San groups contributed to the demise of their hunter-gatherer lifeway in a similar manner. The shortage of game, as well the expropriation of land by European settlers who were arriving in increasing numbers, is likely to have forced the San to choose between a number of strategies for survival.

One strategy adopted appears to have been maintain a degree of independence from farming communities through the occupation of refuge areas such as the broken country of the Drakensberg and the remote plateau of Nomansland/East Griqualand at its base (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976). Here game was still plentiful and the San would still have been able to hunt and gather for subsistence and, perhaps, for the trade in ivory and skins. The settlement pattern of the southern Nguni was characterised by regions containing a number of tribal clusters, and attached to, or separating, these regions were areas unsettled by farmers and reserved for important hunting and gathering activities (Derricourt 1974:71). Such uninhabited belts between independent political units are a common feature of less populous small-scale societies (Wilson 1982:85) and there is considerable evidence suggesting that the area at the base of the Drakensberg constituted such a region (Callaway 1919:85-86; Brownlee 1923:42-43; Wright 1971:11, 60; Wilson 1982:85; Cape GH 8/23:388, statement of Hans Lochenburg ). Derricourt (1974:50, 54-55) has argued against the validity of recorded traditions indicating that the Mpondomise originally settled in this area, and the many reports of its isolation, as well as the unsuitability of the area for farming due to its sour grazing and acid soils (Maggs 1984:357) suggest that it was occupied almost exclusively by hunter-gatherers until well into the 19th century. It would probably also have been exploited by farmers for the purposes of hunting, however, and San in these areas would not have been completely isolated from Nguni and Sotho society.

Refugia such as Nomansland and other remote areas still well populated with game may have been exploited by 19th century San groups (such as those encountered by Bain [Lister 1949] and Rev.Boyce [Steedman 1835]), trading ivory and skins with the southern Nguni and perhaps also with some Sotho groups. These activities may be depicted in the art - Vinnicombe (1976:12) has suggested that paintings of elephants and elephant-hunting in the Drakensberg may be evidence for the participation of the San in the ivory trade. As larger game became increasingly scarce in areas outside these refugia, the value of ivory and skins is likely to have greatly increased. San occupying these refugia would thus probably have been well rewarded for supplying these items, and it is possible that hunting and gathering for subsistence became secondary to the trade in game products. The establishment of Fort Willshire as an official trading post on the Keiskamma River in 1824 (Derricourt 1977:191) provided a stimulus to trade between the Xhosa and the Colony, and if the Xhosa were obtaining some of their ivory from the San, as appears to have been the case, trade between these groups is also likely to have increased greatly at this time. The fact that the San group encountered by Bain were trading ivory for cattle (Lister 1949) may indicate that San communities were hunting and gathering for trade as well as subsistence. Some San may have become what

Fox (1969) has termed "professional primitives", hunting and gathering almost exclusively for trade in a manner typical of many hunter-gatherer communities in other areas.

The possible increased importance placed on hunting for trade with Bantu-speakers and others, the intensified hunting of game with guns and horses and the subsequent decline in game populations are all likely to have had significant effects on gender relations within the San communities. If hunting for trade became an important part of the economy of some San groups, the relatively large returns received from this activity may have led to a decline in the importance attributed to gathering, with an associated loss of women's power and status within these communities. The Okiek and other Dorobo of Kenya, for example, hunt extensively but seldom gather. It appears that by trading skins and meat they are able to obtain domestic carbohydrate from other groups, and the need to gather plant foods has consequently been greatly reduced. The acquisition of domestic carbohydrate such as maize from black farmers through trade may have resulted in a similar decline in gathering activities within San communities. With the hunting out of game by the San and other communities accumulating a surplus for trade, gathering is likely to have once again become the mainstay of the economies of those San groups not yet absorbed into farming communities. The lack of game may have resulted in San men's gathering extensively with women. All these suggestions as to the potential effects on San gender relations of changes consequent upon San interaction with black farmers are admittedly speculative, however, and further research needs to be undertaken to test their validity.

Many San groups involved in trade, such as that encountered by Bain and other Europeans, may have included Bantu-speakers, and we can expect these people to have had a significant effect on the San communities into which they were incorporated. Other Bantu-speakers, while not actually joining San bands who were trading in ivory, could have learned elephant hunting skills from the San and become primary producers, as was the case with Dumisa, an Nhangwini chief. This man was sheltered by San in his youth. He and members of his group, some of whom appear to have married San women who taught them how to make poison (Vinnicombe 1976:100), learned the art of hunting elephants with poisoned assegais from the San. Thereafter Dumisa and his followers lived by hunting elephants, eating the meat of these animals and trading the ivory with Europeans and Nguni (Wright 1971:9, 33; Vinnicombe 1976:12, 104-105). According to a tradition recorded by James Stuart (Webb and Wright 1979:34) the San were in league with Dumisa and would leave the tusks for him when they killed elephants. Dumisa appears to have adopted this way of life at the time of the Difaqane (Wright 1971:33) and

it is possible that other Nguni or Sotho involved in these struggles adopted a similar mode of subsistence, in competition or in co-operation with San bands.

Another means by which beleaguered south-eastern San groups subsisted during the 19th century, other than by trading in ivory and perhaps other game products, was by allying themselves with southern Nguni and Sotho chiefdoms in raids on the increasing number of European farms established during the 1830s. The European farmers ignored the land claims of the San when they arrived in Natal in large numbers, after crossing the Drakensberg in 1837, and they were almost immediately subjected to cattle raids by the San (Vinnicombe 1976:12, 23). The reputation of these farmers with respect to their treatment of San in the Colony is likely to have preceded them and would almost certainly have been a contributing factor to these raids (Vinnicombe 1976:23).

San raids on the livestock of European farmers, as has been mentioned, were often conducted with the complicity of southern Nguni and Phuti chiefs, who bought stolen cattle and horses from the San, traded the livestock for their own horses and cattle or kraaled the animals for the San. As Campbell (1987:60) has remarked, the south-eastern San used stolen livestock to transform their economic relationships with black farmers. Whether the San were exploited in these relationships (Campbell 1987:61) is debatable, however. Chiefs such as Mandela and Moorosi who had close relationships with San and were related to them by marriage did everything possible to protect San in their territories from the Colonial authorities. While it was clearly in their interest to continue receiving stolen cattle from the San, the fact that they were related to the San suggests that their decision to protect the San within their territories was motivated by factors other than simple economic gain.

The exertion of increasing pressure by the Colonial authorities on chiefs allied to the San encouraged some of them to sever their relations with San under their protection. This process was later reinforced both by the establishment of barrier locations at the base of the Drakensberg to act as a first line of defence against San raiders on European farms, thus subjecting black farmers in these locations to increasing raids by San based in the mountains, and by the incentives given by the Colonial authorities to black farmers to undertake punitive raids on the San (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976). It seems clear that the San felt betrayed by their former allies, now acting in league with the European authorities (Wright 1971:107), and this is likely to have resulted in a worsening of relations between many San and farming communities.

During the course of the 19th century, an increasing number of south-eastern San communities would have abandoned hunting and gathering altogether and formed small farming communities of their own or, probably in the great majority of cases, been completely absorbed into Nguni, Sotho and other communities. A San chief, Yele, took the former path and by 1840 had settled at the mouth of the Mzumbe River on the south coast of Natal. His band of ten men, including "Bushman kaffirs", had all married Bantu-speakers, possessed cattle and were cultivating crops by this time (Wright 1971:66; Vinnicombe 1976:34). The absorption of San communities into Nguni and Sotho society is likely to have been a relatively gradual process which intensified with the progressive unviability of particular regions for hunting and gathering for trade or subsistence. In the course of this process some members of bands would probably have continued to live by hunting and gathering in the more mountainous areas, while kin who had intermarried with Bantu-speakers lived in villages, as was the case with some San groups attached to the Phuti (Wright 1971:175-176; Vinnicombe 1976:92). Other San communities may have initially established relatively permanent settlements on the outskirts of the farmers' villages, attaching themselves to these communities as clients, and perhaps undertaking certain tasks, such as herding, for them in return for milk and a share of their crops. These settlements were probably established in forested areas or river valleys near to villages, where it would have been possible to hunt and gather to a limited extent, but where the San would have been able to maintain regular contact with the larger encapsulating society. Thus Andrew Smith reported that San inhabited thickets adjoining a black farming settlement (Lye 1975:160), a San family encountered by Sir Walter Stanford in 1884 were reported to be living in "their rocks", apparently close to Mpondomise settlements (Macquarrie 1962:30), a small San community occupied a cave on the Inqu River within relatively easy reach of Mpondomise settlements in the early years of this century (Jolly 1986; Lewis-Williams 1986; Prins 1990) and a residual hunter-gatherer community appears to have occupied a small wood in the territory of the Sotho c.1930 (How 1962: 44). All of these communities were probably in the process of being incorporated into farmer society, but appear to have chosen to live in more secluded areas fringing the areas occupied by farming communities. This may have been a general pattern of settlement adopted by the San prior to their absorption into Nguni and Sotho society.

Loubser and Laurens (in press) suggest that San occupying the south-eastern Orange Free State who were not full-time hunter-gatherers moved regularly and seasonally between Sotho-Tswana villages and adjacent mountains, combining pastoralism with hunting and gathering. While in the villages during the winter months, they participated in the economy of the farmers, obtaining livestock as payment for

services that they rendered. During the summer months, it is suggested, they moved into the Lesotho mountains where they both hunted and gathered and pastured their cattle, thus exploiting the summer-grazing potential of these areas. This model, as Loubser and Laurens point out, accords well with the account by Allison's Sotho informant of the regular movement of San between Phuti villages and the mountains. Quite considerable numbers of San with livestock were reported by Arbousset to have occupied the Maluti c.1825 (Ambrose and Brutsch 1991), although their keeping livestock was considered an unusual practice by the Sotho (or perhaps by Arbousset who may well have assumed that Baroa never kept livestock). It is possible that these people, who had intermarried with the Sotho, moved seasonally in the manner suggested by Loubser and Laurens, spending the winter months in Sotho villages in the lower-lying areas and the summer months in the mountains with their livestock. Other 19th century San communities on the southern Highveld, such as those associated with Type R settlements on the Riet River, possessed cattle but appear to have formed their own communities and settled in one place rather than moving between Sotho villages and the mountains (Humphreys 1972, 1988).

While some San groups acquired cattle from farmers there were good reasons why others chose not to do so. The decreased mobility which the acquisition of cattle entailed would have made it difficult to combine hunting and gathering with this mode of subsistence, and the acquisition of cattle is likely to have invited attacks by Bantu-speakers and other San groups. Arbousset remarked that those San groups living in the Maluti who possessed cattle were subjected to raids by Sotho-Tswana, despite their policy of intermarrying with farming communities as a form of insurance against the theft of their livestock. These San groups were eventually attacked by Griquas who carried off all their possessions (Ambrose and Brutsch 1991:82). Comments made to Andrew Smith by a San informant north of Kuruman confirm that it was precisely the possibility of encouraging such attacks which decided some San groups against keeping cattle, even when this was feasible. According to this man, the San of this region had never kept cattle and any cattle acquired were always slaughtered and eaten, as they would otherwise immediately be raided by their fellow-San and other groups. They "found their only safety to consist of their poverty" (Lye 1975:178-179). Similarly, Turnbull (1965) attributes the immediate-return economy of the Mbuti to their desire to avoid domination by neighbouring farmers, and Blackburn (1982) remarks that the Okiek have avoided attacks by the Maasai by not keeping cattle.

There were thus clearly significant constraints on the ability of some San groups to keep cattle, and it is unlikely that all 19th century San groups were either able or willing to adopt this mode of subsistence. Those that did were particularly likely to be

raided, not forming part of a larger political grouping like the Sotho and Nguni chiefdoms, which would have allowed them to draw upon an extensive reservoir of armed forces when retrieving stolen livestock. Some 19th century San communities, perhaps including those protected by Nguni or Sotho patrons, may have been able to acquire and retain livestock, but others who were less well protected probably adopted different lifeways. As has already been remarked, we can expect a wide range of economic systems intermediate between those of the hunter-gatherers and farmers to have developed before the San were fully absorbed into Nguni and Sotho society.

By the latter half of the 19th century these adaptations to the ever increasing pressures being experienced by the south-eastern San would have formed a complex mosaic of different, and perhaps interchangeable, lifeways. Some San groups may have adopted different subsistence modes on an *ad hoc* basis as their circumstances changed with great rapidity during the 19th century. Hitchcock (1982:236) has remarked that 20th century San of the Kalahari, like other hunter-gatherers, "should be seen as opportunists taking advantage of new resources when and if they decide it would be worthwhile". The farming lifeway of the southern Nguni and Sotho represented only one of a range of "resources" available to the south-eastern San, and they may have selectively tapped into this resource as it suited them. This would have allowed the formation of loose, *ad hoc* relationships of the kind which Loubser and Laurens suggest characterised interaction between many south-eastern San and Sotho-Tswana communities during the 19th century.

A critical factor in determining whether the south-eastern San were able to selectively adopt a range of lifeways, varying the intensity of their relationships with farming communities at will, would have been their ability to move into areas removed from the influence of these communities. Here we need to distinguish between *external* frontier situations, which allow a choice between adaptation to or exit from the encapsulating farmer society, and *internal* frontiers, which permit a more restricted choice between adaptation to, or complete absorption into, the dominant farming communities (Fox 1969). Where the south-eastern San were restricted territorially by an internal frontier, they are unlikely to have been able to exercise a wide range of options with respect to the lifeway they practised, and they probably altered their subsistence patterns to fit the definition of the larger agriculturist society. The existence of an external frontier, on the other hand, with the possibility of escape from farmer society into areas relatively remote from their influence and still capable of supporting hunting and gathering, would have allowed the San to have exercised a much wider range of subsistence options on a relatively *ad hoc* basis.

By the end of the 19th century almost all south-eastern San groups had been absorbed into the Nguni, Sotho and other communities, such as the Griquas. Those San communities that maintained a degree of independence from their farmer neighbours appear to have split into small encapsulated groups of related individuals who maintained close links with particular chiefdoms. In some cases they were employed as ritual functionaries by the farmers to whom they were affiliated. By undertaking "symbolic labour", such as rainmaking, for the black farmers within whose territories they lived, probably supplementing this with limited hunting and gathering, they were able to eke out a living on the margins of farmer society (Jolly 1992). Some of these communities appear to have still spoken San languages, as well as Bantu languages, and continued to paint and perform certain San rituals (Jolly 1986; Lewis-Williams 1986; Prins 1990), probably modified by contact with farming communities. Sightings of isolated south-eastern San individuals occurred between c.1870 and the early years of the 20th century (Wright 1971:179-180; Vinnicombe 1976:101-107), and a San hunter may have occupied a rock shelter in the Mhlwasini Valley a few years before 1926 (Vinnicombe 1971:611). By c.1920, however, almost all those residual San communities living within the territory of the southern Nguni and southern Sotho appear to have been completely absorbed into farmer society.

## 5 SOME DOCUMENTED AND HYPOTHESISED EFFECTS OF INTERACTION ON S.E. SAN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANISATION, CULTURE AND RITUAL PRACTICE

As has been noted, symbiosis characterised many of the relationships formed between the south-eastern San and black farmers. Inter-marriage between the San and these farmers, joint participation in cattle raids and the establishment of trading relationships with farmers would have acted, in many cases, to draw the two groups into closer contact with one another. This process is likely to have impacted on the societies of both the San and the southern Nguni/Sotho and have been reflected in changes in their languages, serogenetic constitution, political and social organisations, cultures and ritual practices.

### A) LANGUAGE AND INTERACTION

Both the Xhosa and Zulu languages and their associated dialects reveal the influence of Khoisan languages, reflecting considerable interaction between the Nguni and Khoisan. The very high percentage of borrowings from the Khoi and San evident in

Nguni languages is strongly suggestive of these peoples' having lived in close association with one another (Louw 1986:160). It is the Khoisan influence which distinguishes the southern Bantu languages from other Bantu languages and the "great break in the phonological structure of Xhosa as a Bantu language was caused by the adoption of the foreign phonemes of Khoi and probably also some San languages" (Louw 1977:129). While the click consonants are the phonemes which are most easily recognized as Khoisan-derived, there are also several other phonemes which the Nguni adopted from the Khoi or San (Louw 1977:129).

The Nguni acquired three main clicks from the Khoi, a fact first recognized in 1857 by the linguist, Dohne (Bourqin 1951:59). Lanham (cited by Peires 1982:24) estimates that just over 15% of all Xhosa words contain clicks, but Finlayson (cited by Louw 1977:147) has calculated that 38% of the words in one Xhosa dictionary have clicks. Taking these words together with non-click Xhosa words derived from Khoi, Louw (1977:147) estimates that the number of Xhosa words showing Khoi or San influence is as large as 40 - 45% of the total number of Xhosa words recorded. Bourqin (1951) points out that only a small proportion of click-words in a Xhosa dictionary have Zulu and Sotho cognates, suggesting that the great majority of click words were acquired after the division of the southern and northern Nguni. Some of these words appear to have been acquired in later times after the Nguni split and the Xhosa moved further down the east coast, as they are not shared with the Zulu (Louw 1986:154).

Many Xhosa words and place-names are derived from San languages (Kingon 1916; Louw 1977, 1986), and terms for geographical features were probably borrowed as the Xhosa encroached upon San territories in the Ciskei and Transkei. As Harinck (1969) has pointed out, studies of Xhosa borrowings from Khoi isolate certain areas in which Khoi influence on Xhosa society was greatest, such as in the sphere of religious belief and ritual practice. While preliminary studies have been undertaken of San influence on southern Nguni society through analysis of Xhosa borrowings from the San (Louw 1977, 1986), more detailed studies, concentrating specifically on San influence, are likely to reveal much information about the socioeconomic relationships established between the lenders and borrowers. This is likely to be a profitable area for future research.

## B) INTERMARRIAGE AND MISCEGENATION

A number of serogenetic studies have been undertaken which throw light upon the extent of miscegenation between San groups and Bantu-speaking populations. Although there are a number of problems associated with assumptions of ethnic identity inherent in these studies, Jenkins (1986:67) has concluded that: "All the Bantu-speaking peoples and all the Khoisan-speaking negro peoples of Southern Africa (with the exception of the Damara of Namibia) who have been the subject of gene marker studies have shown an appreciable amount of Khoisan admixture."

Geneticists have been able to isolate particular genes ( $Gm^{1,13}$  and  $Gm^{1,21}$ ) which are characteristic of Khoisan populations and serve to mark these people or their genetic contribution to other populations. Khoisan possess these alleles in appreciable frequencies, as well as classical "negro" alleles (Jenkins et al 1970). By measuring the frequency of these characteristic Khoisan genes in other populations, geneticists can assess the degree of genetic relatedness between the Khoisan and other populations. Another less commonly used means of discriminating between Khoisan and Negroid Bantu-speaking populations is through measurement of Duffy blood group antigens, associated with susceptibility to one form of malaria. "One of the strongest distinctions between negroes and the rest of humanity is the relative rarity of Duffy blood group antigens among them and their commonness or universality in all other peoples. The San possess both  $Fy^a$  and  $Fy^b$  .... whereas in the Southern African negro populations the frequencies of both are so low that the contrasts in frequencies can hardly be significant. It is probable that all Duffy positivity found in the Southern African negroes represents gene flow from the San " (Nurse et al 1985: 120 - 121).

Measurements of the frequencies of  $Gm^{1,13}$  in various African Bantu-speaking populations allow us to assess, subject to sampling limitations, the degree of miscegenation that has occurred between these groups and Khoisan populations. The results (Jenkins et al 1970:210) reveal that the Xhosa, Bhaca, Mpondo and Hlubi all have significant percentages of Khoisan admixture, with the Xhosa having most (60%) and the Hlubi least (37%). More than 50% of Khoisan genes found in 32 sub-Saharan populations studied by Jenkins (1986) were found in the southern Nguni. Unfortunately, southern Nguni groups, such as the Thembu and Mpondomise, who are known to have had close relations with the San, appear not to have been tested. The Zulu displayed 45%

admixture. The Sotho displayed 29% admixture, but no distinction was made between the various Sotho groups - a possible source of error since it is known that intermarriage with San occurred more frequently in some Sotho groups than in others and the results may be skewed by treating the Sotho as one group.

As San and farmers were brought into symbiotic contact, the incidence of intermarriage between the groups is likely to have increased. That intermarriage between San and Bantu-speakers occurred is confirmed, as we have seen, not only by serogenetic studies but also by the historical record and the traditions of the southern Nguni and Sotho. It is likely that such marriage ties would have been a major cause of the San's being drawn closer into the ambit of agriculturist society. While the male members of the San branch under Yele all married Bantu-speakers (Wright 1971: 66) and some 19th century San chiefs also married women from black farming communities (Loubser and Laurens in press) the traditions of the southern Nguni and Sotho suggest that it was much more common for San women to marry black farmers than for San men to marry women from farming communities. The social conditions governing the flow of women between hunter-gatherer and farming communities have been discussed by Morris (1992), and the general principle that appears to have operated is that marriages were hypergynous, with women marrying upwards into more powerful societies, as is the case with Mbuti hunter-gatherers and Lese farmers of the Ituri (Bailey 1991:104-105). Since the social status of hunter-groups was generally lower than that of farmers, San women married black farmers and settled in farming communities (an exception, which was clearly considered remarkable, was the case of the Phetla chief, Matelile, who went to live with his San wife in the caves at Ntlo-kholo). Analysis of skeletal remains at the Riet River Type R settlements suggests that gene flow was largely unidirectional (Morris 1992:165, 167). Only where there were few, if any, San women available as mates (as was probably the case in Yele's band) or where a San chief was considered an acceptable husband because of his superior social status, are San men likely to have married black women.

Arbousset's remark that Maluti San chiefs used to encourage marriage alliances between their subjects and their "Bechuana" neighbours in order to pre-empt the possibility of cattle raids (Ambrose and Brutsch 1991:82) suggests that the San perceived advantages to be derived from such marriages. San women may have been actively encouraged to marry into the southern Nguni and Sotho in order to create links with these communities which could be exploited in times of need (Campbell 1987:42-43), in the

same way that intermarriage between Nguni groups was sometimes encouraged, so that, in the event of one of the groups being attacked, their members were assured of refuge in the territories of those with whom they had intermarried.

The drain of marriageable women from San society and the "hijacking" (Dennell 1985:125) of hunter-gatherers' mating networks by farmers is likely to have placed considerable strain on hunter-gatherer societies as it became increasingly difficult for San men to find wives. A variety of strategies were probably adopted by these men to obtain mates. One of these may have been the acquisition of cattle to obtain women living in farming communities whose families would require payment of cattle in return for giving their daughters in marriage. Cattle could have been obtained by raiding black or European farmers or by the San's attaching themselves to farming communities and earning cattle in return for services rendered to farmers. In the latter case, this would, in turn, have served to draw these people closer to southern Nguni and Sotho society.

We know very little about those San who married into farmer society and the children produced by these marriages. Some evidence suggests that Nguni of San descent constituted a separate clan within Nguni society. Fuze (1979:3) has remarked: "(The San's) disappearance ... was due to intermarriage with our people (the Zulu) ... Even now there is amongst us a clan by the name of *Mutwa*. This surname refers to ... the Bushmen" (my bracketed additions). Nguni women of San descent are sometimes similarly differentiated today and are termed *Mthwakazi* (Prins and Lewis 1992:140). This may be a very old custom, as the San wife of the early Mpondomise chief, Newini, was, according to tradition, similarly known as "*Um-Ntwakazi*" (Callaway 1919:16).

Interesting information concerning the rules governing the acceptance of children of mixed marriages into farmer society was provided by an old Nguni woman of San descent still living in the Tabankulu District, Transkei. This woman's name is Mtuakazi and her clan name *Mtwa* (meaning a San person). She stated that the group identity of children of mixed San-Nguni marriages was determined according to whether such marriages occurred between a San woman and Nguni man or between a San man and an Nguni woman. In the former case, children resulting from the marriage were considered to be Nguni. Those born of marriages between San men and Nguni women were considered to be San (Statement of Mtuakazi, Tabankulu District). Rules of descent such as these would clearly have acted to discourage Nguni women from marrying into the

San. At the same time they would have allowed Nguni men the advantages of marrying San women or taking them as concubines without fear of social stigmatisation, since their children would be accepted as full members of Nguni society.

The establishment of kinship links is likely to have facilitated access to San ritual services by black farmers who had married San women, and agriculturists may have gained access to San rainmaking services in this way (Campbell 1987:7, 42-43). As I will argue later, such kinships links probably also introduced the San to Nguni and Sotho ritual practices, including their male initiation ceremonies.

### C) DEVELOPMENT OF HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURES AND LEADERSHIP ROLES

Interaction between the south-eastern San and black farmers may have resulted in the development of hierarchical social structures in some San societies and increased differentiation of status between members of these San communities. Some hunter-gatherers outside the study area are known to have developed relatively elaborate systems of political organisation, including well-developed systems of leadership and ceremonial ranking (Bender 1978:214-218). A number of 19th century San communities had quite well-developed political structures and leadership roles, and these may well reflect the influence of contact with hierarchically-structured farming communities (Prins 1991).

The development of ranking in many south-eastern San hunter-group communities possibly resulted from their involvement in trade with southern Nguni and Sotho farmers. Those members of San groups trading with black farmers who were best able to mediate with farmers in these transactions may have been promoted by the San as leaders. In other cases they may have been actively promoted by the farmers themselves as a result of their ability to deal with them in economic transactions. The Tswana, for example, promote San with whom they wish to deal in such transactions as leaders. These people are often not those chosen as leaders by the !Kung themselves, with the result that the structure of leadership within bands is changed to accommodate "internal" and "external" leaders. "Internal" leaders, chosen by the !Kung, derive their status from long-standing *N!ore* ownerships and are generally self-effacing and egalitarian in their dealings with others, while "external" leaders, elected by the Tswana, are more articulate, worldly-wise and relatively dominant compared to traditional leaders (Lee 1982:50). A

similar system of parallel leadership may have developed in response to the south-eastern San's involvement in exchange networks.

The different "internal" and "external" leadership roles appear to represent an incongruity within San social organisation. As Bird-David (1988) points out, however, apparently contradictory behaviour patterns and attitudes to social roles similarly characterise South Indian hunter-gatherers, the Naiken, in their dealings with other hunter-gatherers and non-Naikens. While these attitudes and behaviour patterns logically appear to be opposites they in fact complement each other, and it appears that external social systems are drawn upon to compensate for the lack of certain facilities within the social organisation of the hunter-gatherers.

It is possible that some south-eastern San individuals managed to increase their material wealth relative to other members of their communities as a result of trade with Bantu-speakers and that differences in material wealth led to differentiation of status within these societies. Campbell (1987:62, 77) has suggested that property relations of this sort may have first developed with the arrival of Europeans, who brought with them large numbers of cattle and exotic goods, but such relations could well have developed earlier. The south-eastern San would have been able to obtain both cattle and exotic goods from Bantu-speakers long before the arrival of Europeans in their territories. If these cattle and other goods, acquired through trade or the provision of ritual services, were appropriated by certain individuals such as shamans, it may have had the effect of creating an embryonic class system within San society, of a kind which Campbell (1987:45-46) suggests developed only at a later stage.

Some later San leaders are known to have been distinguished from their followers with respect to elaboration and richness of ornament and appear to have been accorded certain privileges. This is evident from Burchell's (1953 II:61) description of "Oud Kraai-kop", a San leader whose group had acquired some livestock: "Their chief, or captain, was distinguished in a manner so singular, that my Hottentots were highly diverted at the ridiculous insignia of his rank; and as they could not clearly understand his proper name, gave him that of Oud Kraai-kop (Old Crow-head) as he wore the head of a crow fixed upon the top of his hair." A headdress, almost certainly an insignia of rank similar to Oud Kraai-kop's, is depicted in a rock painting, now housed in the Africana Museum, which depicts a bird on top of an elaborately-attired figure's head (see

Lewis-Williams 1990:49). It has been proposed that, rather than forming part of the figure's headdress, this bird is symbolic of a San shaman transformed into a bird living a state of trance (Lewis-Williams 1990: 48), but Burchell's description of Oud Kraai-kop, which demonstrates that the range of headdresses worn by the San was much wider than is often considered to be the case, strongly suggests that the bird is real and signifies the rank of this person. We should therefore take into account the possibility that what appear to be unfamiliar or even bizarre features of certain paintings may, in some cases, represent the dress, equipment or ornament of San and/or other groups rather than the trance experiences of San shamans.

Another example of insignia of rank associated with a San leader is the belt made of intricately-worked beads found on Soai, the Maluti San leader, after he was killed by the Sotho (Dornan 1909:449-450). The San leader, Nqabayu, was distinguished from the members of his band in ways aside from ornament and dress. Nqabayu had two wives while other men in the band had only one. He also prepared and dispensed poison for their arrows, and it is possible that this preparation involved esoteric knowledge which was monopolised by some San chiefs.

While the accumulation of a surplus through trade and raiding may well have contributed to the development of increased hierarchisation within San society, there would also have been other reasons for the establishment of strong leadership roles. Organisation of cattle raids would have been facilitated by the promotion of individuals as leaders to direct these operations. Gullbrandsen (1991) has pointed out that strong leadership roles are likely to develop where communities share the same critical problems with respect to external groups. San "chiefs" or "captains" would have performed an important function in holding San communities together in the face of increasing pressures which were acting to fragment these groups, as well as in forging numbers of smaller communities into larger units capable of better withstanding attacks by both Bantu-speakers and Europeans. An increased elaboration of San ritual and consequent importance of the role of shamans is likely to have resulted from these pressures, although San ritual is also likely to have intensified in response to factors unrelated to stress and conflict. The possible important political role played by San shamans, both on behalf of the community and for their own ends, has been discussed by Campbell (1987).

A corollary to the establishment of trading relationships with black farmers and the development of hierarchical structures within San society may have been a decline in traditional San systems of reciprocity. Mazel (1987) has suggested that prior to c.A.D.1000 goods were exchanged between hunter-gatherers and farmers in order to maintain equitable social relations, but thereafter, as a result of a change in the farmers' mode of production, farming communities traded goods with hunter-gatherers in return for services rendered or for hunter products. The effects of this diversion of energy away from reciprocity and towards barter may have been to detrimentally affect the San's ability to maintain social order and settle disputes (Moore, cited in Hall 1986:48), with the result that conflict resolution was transferred to farmers, perhaps promoting an increase in sedentism amongst hunter-gatherer communities (Hall 1986:48). It is possible that a similar structural change in exchange relations occurred not only between San and others but also within and between San groups. As has previously been mentioned, Fox (1969) has remarked upon the breakdown of systems of reciprocity among South Indian hunter-gatherers as a result of trade with farmers, with a consequent fragmentation of the larger society into individually competitive units comprised of single families, each geared to external trade or exchange. San rainmaking families living within the territory of the southern Nguni in the late 19th century (Jolly 1986, 1992; Prins 1990) may represent a process of social fragmentation similar to that described by Fox.

#### D) INTERACTION AND RITUAL PRACTICES

If the San were seeking a way to be incorporated into southern Nguni and Sotho communities and/or if these communities wished to incorporate San into their societies, this may most easily have been accomplished, aside from intermarriage, through the employment of San by farmers as ritual functionaries. The San are likely to have been considered by the southern Nguni and Sotho to be well suited to this role. This is attested to by the mixture of fear and respect accorded hunter-gatherers by farmers, who almost universally attribute them with supernatural powers.

The attitudes of farmers to hunter-gatherers are often characterised by ambivalence. On the one hand, as a result of their not keeping cattle and their roaming lifestyle, hunter-gatherers are often despised as being little better than animals. A corollary to this appears to be that they are respected and feared for their supernatural

powers and possession of arcane knowledge associated with their "otherness" (Ellenberger 1953; Wright 1971; Blackburn 1974; Louw 1977; Fuze 1979; Kenny 1981; Bahuchet and Guillaume 1982; Woodburn 1988; Jolly 1986, 1992; Prins 1990; Prins and Lewis 1992). They are generally seen as occupying a liminal position between nature and culture, and for this reason are believed to mediate between the spirit world and the world of human beings (Kenny 1981; Bahuchet and Guillaume 1982; Prins and Lewis 1992; Gordon 1992), the main function of diviners within Nguni and Sotho society. Some non-San hunter-gatherer groups are known to have exploited the liminal status and supernatural powers attributed to them by farmers. Like the Hadza, who trade on their reputation as mysterious people in their dealings with outsiders (Woodburn 1988:41), they are often employed as herbalists and ritual functionaries by agriculturists.

A close association between the ritual practices, medicines and belief systems of the San and Nguni as well as many similarities in the ritual practices of San shamans and Nguni diviners has been demonstrated by Botha and Thackeray (1987), Thackeray (1988, 1990), and by Prins and Lewis (1992), who have noted the mediatory and liminal role of the San in Nguni cosmology. Kenny (1981:487) has drawn attention to the "Dorobo-like attributes" possessed by Meru and Maasai ritual functionaries, and has remarked that the power of the *Mugwe*, a Meru ritual leader, "is that of a domesticated Dorobo brought into the pale of an agricultural society and harnessed to its ends". The attributes of Nguni and Sotho diviners are, similarly, "San-like", and in many cases San ritual functionaries such as rainmakers were "domesticated", brought into the pale of southern Nguni and Sotho society and harnessed to the ends of these societies. The use of San rainmakers by the southern Nguni is well-documented, and the Sotho may have harnessed the powers of the San in a similar manner. According to Sekese the Sotho learned how to make rain (or prevent lightning) from the San (1905b) and a well-known Sotho rainmaker kept San rainmakers at his kraal during this century, having himself been taught to make rain by the San (Damane pers. comm.).

Attaining to the position of diviner, whose powers were believed to be equivalent in many ways to the inherent powers of hunter-gatherers, could well have represented a means by which San individuals were incorporated into farmer communities without a consequent loss of status and automatic membership of a marginalised underclass within these societies (Prins 1991). The office of diviner, unlike almost all other political and religious positions in Nguni society is not hereditary or connected to structural status, and

is open to anyone provided he or she undergoes the necessary spiritual training. "It thus provides a means whereby intelligent or ambitious individuals can attain status and power in the community (and) (i)t is here, too, that the related institutions of religion and magic have their greatest overlap and interplay" (Hammond-Tooke 1962:244, my bracketed additions). The reputation of the San as great magicians and sorcerers and the lack of structural barriers to the occupation of this office would have made it an obvious niche for San to occupy within Nguni and Sotho society, whether they were living separately from these communities or whether they were seeking full incorporation into the larger encapsulating society.

The influence of San shamans, possibly including those who had assumed the role of diviner within Nguni society, is reflected in certain classes of Xhosa words. Several words associated with the rituals of Nguni diviners appear to have been borrowed from, or are associated with, the San (Prins 1992:139, 140) and a number of present-day southern Nguni diviners, presumably speaking metaphorically, remarked to Prins (1992:139) that they "went looking for a Bushman rather than a qualified Nguni diviner to tutor them as diviners". Elphick (1985:27, note 17) has suggested that the people living on the Orange River, called *Samgomomkoa* by Wikar, were probably the *San-goma-qua*. It is quite possible that the Xhosa word *sangoma* (diviner) is derived from this word, which means "Cattle San" in Khoi. This would further indicate links between Nguni diviners and the San, perhaps San shamans paid in cattle for ritual services rendered to Bantu-speakers.

#### E) POSSIBLE SAN PARTICIPATION IN SOUTHERN NGUNI AND SOTHO INITIATION RITES

An important question is whether interaction between the south-eastern San and black farmers was enacted through individuals, families or larger groups (Mazel 1987:265). The comparative survey of interaction between farmers and hunter-gatherers presented in chapter 2 suggests that many groups conduct exchanges of goods and services on an individual level through the formation of close personal relationships between trading partners. Relationships similar to the *ibay* relationship which characterises Agta-farmer exchange (Petersen 1978) also characterise trading relationships between other hunter-gatherers (such as the Hill Pandaram [Morris 1977], Mbuti [Turnbull 1965, 1983] and Okiek [Blackburn 1974, 1982]) and the farming

communities with whom they trade. In these relationships, two individuals, a hunter-gatherer and a farmer, agree to exchange goods and services. The relationship often has ritual as well as economic significance, and trading partners may belong to the same age-sets and be initiated together. Mbuti and their village partners are united for life in the blood bond of the *karé* relationship during a joint initiation ceremony. Similar close relationships are established between Okiek and Maasai partners. An Okiek will take on the clan name of a farmer with whom he establishes a ceremonially sanctioned trading relationship, other Dorobo share the Maasai age-set system, and Dorobo are often adopted into Kikuyu groups specifically in order to establish trading relationships (Kenny 1981:479). Current fictive kin relationships between Okiek and Maasai developed from the formation of close personal friendships between members of these groups (Blackburn 1982:298-299).

It is quite possible, in view of the documented establishment of ritual relationships between members of hunter-gatherer and farmer communities outside the study area, as well as in view of evidence for the participation of the San in the initiation ceremonies of the Sotho which I present below, that the San may have been drawn into the ritual life of Sotho, and perhaps southern Nguni, communities. According to a number of Sotho traditions, the Sotho were taught their present form of circumcision by the San (Dornan 1909:442; Norton 1910b:242; Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:280, 282; Guma 1965:241). Particularly interesting is Father Norton's citing of a tradition that the San took precedence in the Sotho initiation lodge (Norton 1910b:242). This appears to confirm that joint San-Sotho initiation ceremonies were held, and it is possible that the San took precedence in the lodge because of their aboriginal status, which is acknowledged in Sotho traditions (Sekese 1905b). Sekese's comment, already cited, that the San "are spoken of a great deal in the initiation songs as if from the beginning there was no separation between us" may also indicate the occurrence of joint Sotho-San initiation ceremonies.

The participation of the San in Sotho male initiation ceremonies may have involved the employment of San as ritual functionaries at the initiation ceremonies of Sotho youths, or it may have involved ceremonies which included both San and Sotho initiates. San initiates may have been invited to participate in such ceremonies as a result of a desire by the Sotho to establish ritual ties between Sotho and San of the same age-sets, which would later form the basis of trading partnerships. It is also possible that

such joint initiation ceremonies were believed by the farmers to bring the San under the control of their ancestors and served to bind them to farmer society, as is the case with the *nkumbi* ceremony associated with joint Mbuti-villager initiation. The participation of San youths in these ceremonies may have resulted from kin ties between San and the children of San-Sotho marriages who had been brought up in Sotho communities and were about to be initiated with Sotho youths. San youths related by blood to Sotho-San of the same age-set may well have been invited, or even required, to be initiated with their relatives. They may afterwards have become "special friends" who traded with each other, as do many hunter-gatherers and farmers who have established ceremonially sanctioned relationships.

Similarly, the parents of San children invited to the initiation lodge, or the close San relatives of children born of Sotho-San marriages (such as the brother of a San woman who had married into the Sotho and produced a son due to be initiated) could well have been asked to play a role in the initiation of their nephews or of youths otherwise related to them. San elders may have officiated as *Basuoe* (circumcisers) at a lodge which included youths to whom they were related, but who were being brought up in Sotho rather than San communities. San may not only have officiated at joint Sotho-San initiation ceremonies, however, but may have been invited by Sotho to perform the role of circumcisers at a lodge attended only by Sotho initiates. The employment as ritual functionaries of San, the acknowledged original inhabitants of the land and possessors of supernatural powers, could well have been considered appropriate for a rite which places great emphasis on a return to an earlier, more primitive condition. The initiation lodges, for example, are established well away from the centres of culture, the villages, and are sometimes situated in caves, the dwellings of the San; skins are worn by the initiates, reverting to the days before the blanket reached the Basotho (Coates 1966:76); and the youths are circumcised with a sharp flint rather than a knife (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:28). Perhaps as a result of a similar association between hunter-gatherers and a primeval state, the Okiek are much in demand as circumcisers by the Maasai - a service that is not only the most important rendered by the Okiek to the Maasai but also of some antiquity (Blackburn 1982).

The male initiation ceremony is probably the most important Sotho rite and has been described as "the base on which all their civil, political and social life rests" (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912:280). If San youths and other San participated in this

ceremony as initiates and ritual functionaries respectively, and some evidence suggests this was the case, it would indicate a very close relationship between these San and Sotho groups. This has consequences for our understanding of the forms taken by interaction between the south-eastern San and Sotho, and, if the San played a similar role in southern Nguni initiation rites, for San interaction with these people as well.

As has been already mentioned, cosmological influence is unlikely to have been unidirectional. Aside from the influence of the San on the religious ideology and ritual practices of farming communities, it is also likely that hunter-gatherers, including the south-eastern San, were strongly influenced by the religious concepts and ritual practices of neighbouring farmers, and were drawn into the religious life of these people in a manner similar to that documented for other hunter-gatherer groups. The implications for our understanding of the rock art of both this influence and the possible participation of San in Nguni and Sotho rituals are explored in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE EFFECTS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN THE SOUTH-EASTERN SAN AND SOUTHERN SOTHO/NGUNI EXPRESSED IN THE ROCK ART

The formation of symbiotic relationships between the south-eastern San and southern Nguni and Sotho communities, some of which have been detailed in previous chapters, needs to be taken into account in rock art studies. The effects of these relationships would probably not only have been expressed within a framework of "traditional" San ideology modified to accommodate changes within San social organisation resultant upon contact. Entirely new structures of religious ideology, as well as new ritual practices borrowed from the southern Nguni and Sotho are also likely to be reflected in the art, and this more direct influence of interaction upon San rock art deserves fuller exploration.

Studies of San rock art have generally assumed the continued existence of a structurally uniform, "pan-San" cognitive system from at least 2000 years B.P. to the present over all southern Africa. The assumption of continuity and stability in San religious ideology and ritual practice ignores the possible influence of the ideologies and ritual practices of encapsulating black farming communities on the cosmologies and ritual life of their San neighbours, and the expression of this influence in the rock art. In the light of recent studies demonstrating the profound effects of contact on hunter-gatherers in southern Africa and elsewhere, the possible expression of southern Nguni and Sotho religious concepts and ritual practices in the rock art of the south-eastern mountains of southern Africa is investigated in this chapter, with specific reference to the testimony of the 19th century Maluti San informant, Qing, concerning paintings from the caves at Melikane and upper Mangolong (Orpen 1874) (Upper Mangolong is probably the modern Pitsaneng shelter about one kilometre upstream from the cave referred to as Mangolong by Orpen. Mangolong is Sehonghong Cave [Mitchell pers. comm.]

Current explanations of the overt content and underlying symbolism of San rock art have largely been formulated within a theoretical paradigm developed by Lewis-Williams (1980, 1981a, 1981b, 1982, 1984). A basic premise which underlies the ideas constituting this paradigm, and which has been increasingly emphasised in the recent literature, is that the art is essentially or even entirely shamanistic, reflecting the trance experiences of San shamans (Lewis-Williams 1980, 1982, 1987, 1988; Lewis-Williams and Dowson 1988, 1989). These experiences, it is further suggested, were mediated by a

structurally uniform, "pan-San", cosmological system, reflective of kin-based relations of production, which existed from at least two millennia B.P., and possibly twenty-six millennia B.P., until the present (Lewis-Williams 1984). The proposed continuity of San ideology has encouraged Lewis-Williams to draw from the ethnography of the 19th century /Xam San and Maluti San, as well as the ethnography of late 20th century Kalahari San, to develop a theory of San rock art which has been extensively used to interpret the art of San communities widely separated both in space and in time.

While this approach has yielded many valuable insights into the meaning and symbolism underlying some of the art, it suffers from a number of deficiencies, the most important of which is its inability to deal systematically with change (Hall 1987b:2) and in particular, I suggest, the effects of contact with black farming communities on San ritual practices and religious ideology. Richards (cited in Gordon 1984:220-221) has pointed out that, while modern San may be able to recognise material assemblages excavated from a site several thousands of years old, it is particularly important not to confuse technical and social categories in this respect, and he remarks that the "ability to call a spade a spade even after several millennia must not be taken to imply continuities of social and political life". This criticism is relevant to analyses of the rock art which rest on the assumption that continuity characterised the ideology of hunter-gatherer populations of southern Africa.

Any theory of the art which emphasises the conservative nature of ideology, and religious ideology in particular, will tend to ignore or minimise the effects of competing ideologies of non-San populations on the cosmologies of the many different San communities existing in southern Africa. A consideration of the possible major and structural effects of other ideological systems on San ideology, and the expression of these structural changes in the art, is conspicuous by its absence in the interpretations of the art proposed by Lewis-Williams. In the light of evidence we possess for early symbiotic interaction between many south-eastern San communities and their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours, which included trading relationships and intermarriage, we may need to consider whether San ideology was in fact characterised by such continuity through both space and time. Comparative analysis of aspects of the religious beliefs and ritual practices of a number of different San groups suggests that, while similarities in ideology undoubtedly do exist between some San groups, there are also a great many differences (Schapera 1930; Jolly 1983). These differences, I have suggested, prevent our assuming the existence of a single ideational culture or culture complex possessed by all San communities (Jolly 1983:106-109), and Mazel(1987) and Solomon (1989) have pointed to some of the problems and contradictions inherent in Lewis-Williams's

assumption of continuity in San ideology over long periods of time. As Skotnes (1991:16) has remarked: "It seems both unrealistic and unhistorical to insist ..... as much recent literature does, that because similarities exist a completely homogeneous 'San cognitive system' can be defined and applied wholesale to any painting made by any southern African hunter-gatherer during the last twenty thousand years".

Some of these differences result from the San's adoption of religious concepts (and ritual practices) from other societies, which may produce a degree of structural dissonance within their ideological systems. A good example of this process is the introduction of the all-powerful, sky god image of #Gao!na into !Kung religious ideology. This image of =Gao!na is very different from the trickster image projected in !Kung mythology. Lorna Marshall has suggested that the present image of #Gao!na was introduced to the !Kung by other groups and that "some sense of logical necessity ... compelled the !Kung to merge the two concepts, but this is a forced and superficial verbal resolution, for the two beings could hardly be more different" (1962:228).

Analyses of the nature and extent of contact between the San and others, particularly where studies elucidate processes of structural change in the cosmologies and ritual practices of the San, should help us to re-interpret the art within the context of such change. The extensive cultural similarities between certain non-San hunter-gatherer groups and the farmers with whom they interact, discussed in chapter 2, are also pertinent to an approach to the interpretation of the art of this kind. As has been detailed in previous chapters, many hunter-gatherer groups have taken on the "cultural clothing" of the farming communities by whom they are encapsulated and have been drawn into the ritual life of their agriculturist neighbours and share much of the cultural identity of the farming communities with whom they are in contact. There is evidence, moreover, which I have presented above, which suggests that some south-eastern San groups were similarly drawn into the ritual life of the southern Nguni and Sotho, and may have participated in their initiation ceremonies as well as other rites such as those related to rainmaking.

Trigger (1968:20) has observed that people who speak the same language and/or have a uniform material culture do not necessarily have a strong sense of common identity. A corollary to this is that similar cultures are often shared by people with different physical, linguistic and economic traits. The assumption of a structurally uniform pan-San cognitive system reflects a more general tendency to make hunter-gatherers exclusively one thing or another, rather than accounting for the variability within their different systems, much of which may have resulted from contact with

different farming communities. The result of such assumptions of uniformity in hunter-gatherer cultural systems has been that "spatial variability is reduced, pattern and homogeneity are artificially produced or exaggerated and 'cultures' and 'societies' are created" (Wobst 1978:306). Parochial models of interaction which make little or no allowance for the influence of different groups on the political, cultural and ideological systems of each other may therefore need revision (Fox 1969; Berntsen 1976; van Zwanenberg and Press 1976; Wobst 1978; Schrire 1980; Elphick 1985; Wilmsen 1989; Wilmsen and Denbow 1990; Shott 1992).

While altered states of consciousness may have been experienced "in all periods of history and in all places", as Lewis-Williams and Dowson (1993:55) propose, it can be argued that the suggestion in much recent literature that such experiences provided the common inspiration for most, perhaps all, San art is essentially reductive. We may therefore need to adopt a wider view of the art than is allowed by the current paradigm (Solomon 1992). Even in those cases where imagery of the art clearly is derived from altered states, such imagery is mediated by cultural expectations and predilections (Lewis-Williams and Dowson 1993:56). We can thus expect cultural and cosmological changes induced in San society as a result of contact with other groups to be reflected in the art. This is likely to be the case whether the imagery of a particular painting is derived from trance experience or whether the painting reflects aspects of social organisation, ritual practice and religious belief which are not associated with altered states. In interpreting the art we need to draw not only from San ethnography, as has almost invariably been the case to date, but, where the artists were influenced by contact with non-San, we also need to draw on those aspects of the cosmologies of other communities which appear most likely to have modified existing San cosmology or which have been adopted in their entirety into the general corpus of San ritual practice and religious ideology.

The possible influence of the southern Nguni and Sotho on south-eastern San cosmology and ritual practice, and the expression of this influence in the art, is likely to have varied considerably, depending on the forms of relationships developed between different farming communities and San groups. Two processes, representing extremes at either end of a spectrum of possible modes of adaptation to contact, can be identified: modification of existing San cosmology to accommodate the influence of contact, but within essentially unchanged or partly modified cosmological and social structures; and incorporation of entire concepts and ritual practices, borrowed from the southern Nguni and Sotho, into San systems, with accompanying structural changes in San ideology. The former process is most likely to have characterised San communities who were

relatively isolated from black farmers and who had weak links with these people. This process of change and its possible expression in the art has been discussed by Campbell (1987), who places greater emphasis on the forces for change generated by the arrival of European farmers than on the arrival of black farming communities. While the influence of Bantu-speakers in these cases may have been relatively indirect and have operated at a distance, it nevertheless probably had a marked effect on some San societies and may have acted to undermine traditional systems of reciprocity and kin-based relations of production. It could well have encouraged the development of new relations, including the "shamanistic", which reflected an unequal sharing of material and ideological resources (Campbell 1987). A process of more direct influence, however, is likely to have characterised interaction between San communities and black farmers who were in constant, close contact with each other and who in many cases had intermarried. It is largely with this process that I am concerned here.

As has been noted, intermarriage between some San and Sotho groups occurred shortly after contact was first established between these groups, according to a number of Sotho traditions (Ellenberger and Macgregor 1912). Intermarriage between the San and Sotho may well have been a major avenue utilised by non-San to access San society, and such access allowed Sotho who were related to the San to participate in the painting activities of these people. Mopote, a son of the Phuti chief Moorosi (who was related to the San by marriage), painted with the San, as did his "half-Bush" stepbrothers (How 1962:33). The fact that Mopote painted with the San was confirmed by other Sotho informants and appears to have been well-known in the area (How 1962:31). San half-castes are reported to have painted until a late date (Dornan 1925:188-189) and there are reports of Sotho, perhaps San descendants, painting until well into this century (Cawston 1931; Battiss 1948; How 1962). Not all of these paintings are distinguishable from the many other contact paintings ascribed to San artists. Some of the paintings executed by the Phuti artist, Masitise, on the walls of the British Residency at Quthing in present-day Lesotho (How 1962), for example, would probably have been difficult to distinguish from San paintings of the later contact period, or even from paintings dating from other periods. These paintings range from the narrative (a scene depicting a battle between the San leaders Soai and Mphaki) to the mythological or hallucinatory (an imaginary beast). There are also finely-executed paintings of horsemen and antelope ascribed to "an old Mosotho", perhaps Masitise, at Quthing (Cawston 1931).

It is unlikely that these are the only paintings executed by Sotho-San or by Sotho belonging to groups closely connected to the San. There could well have been many other cases aside from that described by Mopote where San-Sotho, related by marriage

to San communities, painted together with them in rock shelters. We can expect that a proportion of the paintings in the contact period were executed by painters who were related to the San but were living with southern Nguni and Sotho communities, and this may have occurred over a very long period of time in some cases. If Mopote and his Sotho-San stepbrothers painted with a San community in the latter half of the 19th century there is no reason to suppose that some of the descendants of a San woman who married the Mpondomise chief, Ncwini (Cape of Good Hope 1883 II:403), who was quite possibly still living in the last quarter of the 15th century (Derricourt 1974:59), as well as the progeny of some of the many marriages between San and black farmers since the time of first contact, did not do the same. It would be inappropriate to draw solely on "traditional" San ethnography to interpret paintings executed by these people.

It is not only the paintings executed by San-Sotho half-castes, moreover, that are likely to reflect the influence of southern Nguni and Sotho cosmology, but also the paintings executed by hunter-gatherers living within San communities, but in close contact with black farmers, such as the Phuti. In view of the difficulties associated with dating the art, we may need to take into account the *possibility* that any painting created by San within the sphere of known southern Nguni and Sotho influence reflects, at least in part, the religious beliefs and ritual practices of these people, as well as other aspects of their social life and material culture - combined in some cases with imagery associated with San religious ideology and ritual practices. As Thackeray (1990) has remarked, it may be profitable to adopt a less San-centric approach to analyses of the art. While it is highly unlikely that people who have never been in contact with the San in any way executed the paintings or are reflected in the art (Schofield 1949), a possible direct and structural influence on San religious ideology and ritual practice of those groups occupying the same territories as the San, and in close contact with them, needs to be taken into account in our analyses of the art. We might therefore consider whether "a comparative study of ethnographic and linguistic data from both Bantu- and Bushmen-speaking people may be relevant to anthropological studies of ritual and cosmological systems of Bantu-speakers, as well as having a potential bearing on the interpretation of concepts expressed in the art" (Botha and Thackeray 1987:72).

In the light of intensive and symbiotic interaction known to have occurred between Phuti farmers and many San groups, sections of the important testimony provided by Qing, Joseph Orpen's San informant (Orpen 1874), concerning the mythology, beliefs and ritual practices of the Maluti San community to which he belonged, as well as Qing's comments on the reproductions of paintings at Melikane and upper Mangolong which he viewed with Orpen (see fig. 2), may require re-assessment.

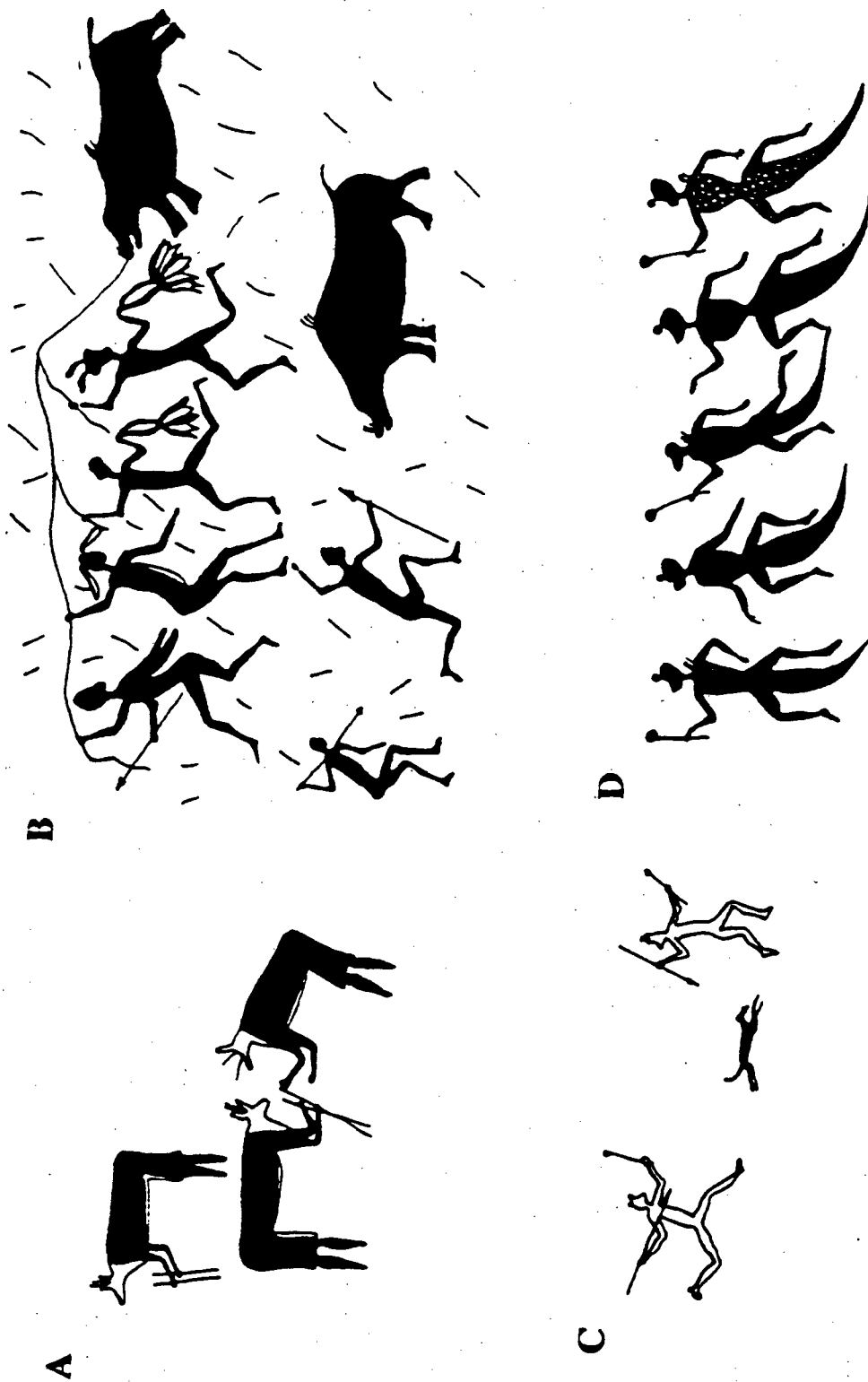


Figure 2. Tracing of Orpen's copies of paintings commented upon by Qing. After Lewis-Williams 1981, fig. 9. A: From the cave at Melikane. B: From the cave at Mangolong (Sehonghong). C: From a cave at the source of the Kraai River. D: From the upper Mangolong cave.

All Qing's comments on these paintings have been interpreted by Lewis-Williams (1980, 1981a) within the context of what are assumed to be pan-San religious beliefs and ritual practices . It has been proposed that, while the material provided by /Xam informants to Bleek and by Qing to Orpen represent separate traditions, these traditions nevertheless form part of the same cognitive system (Lewis-Williams 1981a:32) and that, despite "some differences between the collections, there is unanimity on the rituals and beliefs germane to understanding the paintings" (Lewis-Williams 1987:173). It has further been proposed that resemblances between the Bleek and Orpen collections strongly suggest that Qing's testimony can be used to provide a link between the /Xam and the San artists of the Drakensberg (Lewis-Williams 1980, 1981a). The suggested similarities in the Orpen and Bleek material allow one, it is argued, to use the testimony of the /Xam as well as other San groups to explicate paintings in the Drakensberg, despite the fact that the /Xam interviewed by Bleek did not at that time possess a tradition of painting and were far removed from the Drakensberg San communities (Lewis-Williams 1981). It is worth re-examining Qing's comments on rock paintings at Melikane and upper Mangolong, however, in order to determine whether they reflect a pan-San cognitive system, as Lewis-Williams has suggested, or whether they may in fact reflect concepts and ritual practices derived wholly or partially from Sotho, and perhaps southern Nguni, religious ideology and ritual practice. Links between Qing's San and the Phuti, as well as correspondences between Qing's comments on the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings and southern Nguni/ Sotho religious beliefs and practices, are examined below.

The close association and intermarriage between the Phuti and the San, as noted above, is well-established. According to Captain Allison's informants San are known to have lived in huts amongst Moorosi's Phuti by at least 1869, keeping cattle and sheep and cultivating crops, and these people and the Phuti were in regular contact with their San kin and friends living in the mountains (Wright 1971:175-176; Vinnicombe 1976:91-92). The San leader, Soai, in particular, is known to have had a very close relationship with Moorosi's Phuti. The sons of Khôbôko, the father of Soai, are said to have intermarried with the Phuti (Ellenberger 1953:258); Soai had a wife or lover at Moorosi's place (Damane and Sanders 1974:182); and Soai was visiting Moorosi at the time of the Sotho chief, Jonathan's, attack on his band (Sekese 1912a). According to a very old Sotho informant, Soai was visited in turn at his main base, Sehonghong Cave, by Moorosi and some of his people (Ellenberger 1953:148-149) - an account that accords well with those provided to Captain Allison in 1869. When Moorosi met Soai at Sehonghong, the San chief's followers were reportedly painting in the cave and the Phuti were able to view the artists at work (Ellenberger 1953:148-149). It is possible that it was Soai's San with whom Mopote and his "half-bush" stepbrothers painted, and other Phuti-San, such as

Hoko, a half-caste chief with close ties to the San (Mangoela 1987:42), may well also have visited Soai at Sehonghong.

One of the paintings commented upon by Qing was from Soai's cave, Sehonghong, and another was from upper Mangolong, which was probably situated close to this cave. Melikane Cave, in which the painting of crouched antelope-headed figures holding sticks is situated, is only about 25 kilometres from Sehonghong. It is possible, therefore, that these paintings were executed by members of Soai's band. It is also quite possible, as How (1962:22) suggests, that Qing was one of Soai's sons. He was described by Orpen (1874:2) as the son of a San chief whose band had been exterminated "a couple of years ago" - Soai was killed and his band scattered in 1871 or 1872, approximately two years before Orpen wrote his article. Survivors of the final attack on Soai were reported to have gone to live amongst Moorosi's Phuti (Ellenberger 1953:258), and Qing could well have been one of these refugees. At the time that he was interviewed by Orpen he and his wives were living with, and in the service of, Nqasha, a son of Moorosi (Orpen 1874:2). The strong possibility that Qing had belonged to Soai's band and was the son of this chief who had very close ties with the Phuti, as well as the fact that he was living with Moorosi's son and could speak the language of the Phuti (Orpen 1874:3), all suggest that he and his band had intensive contact with the Phuti for some time before he was interviewed by Orpen. The influence of the Phuti on the religious beliefs and ritual practices of Qing and his fellow San can, I suggest, be detected in the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings and in the comments made by Qing to Orpen concerning these paintings.

Qing commented on the therianthrope figures depicted in the painting from Melikane as follows: "He said 'They were men who had died and now lived in rivers, and were spoilt at the same time as the elands and by the dances of which you have seen paintings'" (Orpen 1874:2). Commenting on the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings he stated: "The men with rhebok's heads, Haqwé and Canaté, and the tailed men, Qweqweté, live mostly under water; they tame elands and snakes" (Orpen 1874:10). Lewis Williams has suggested that Qing's comments concerning the men with rhebok's heads, Haqwé and Canaté, probably do not refer to the Melikane painting as Qing names only two men and there are three figures in this painting. It is proposed that Qing's comments refer to the painting from the Kraai River and that the two figures in this painting were named Haqwé and Canaté, "two specific medicine men known personally to him" (Lewis-Williams 1980:475). Qing's remarks that these men "tame" elands and snakes is considered to be a mistranslation of San concepts expressed by Qing, who in fact meant "control" or "possess" rather than "tame". Lewis-Williams (1980:475)

remarks: "It is therefore likely that Qing was identifying the paintings as two medicine men who 'possessed' (rather than 'tamed') eland and snakes, and who, in the 'death' of trance, were changed by their own and their companions' trance vision into therianthropes with characteristics of one of their 'possessed' creatures".

An examination of Orpen's original manuscript in the S.A. Public Library (MSC 57A, 1 (12)), however, reveals that the words "and Quequete" were inserted by Orpen after "Haqwé and Canaté", but were omitted by the publisher, who also misspelt "Gweqweté" as "Qweqweté" further in the same sentence. Orpen appears to have struggled with the correct spelling of this word, which is variously spelt in his manuscript as "Qwequete", "Quequete" and "Gwequeté". The sentence, as Orpen intended it to be published, should, therefore, read: "The men with rhebok's heads, Haqwé and Canaté and Quequete, and the tailed men, Gweqweté, live mostly under water; they tame elands and snakes". These words are clearly associated with the Melikane painting rather than the painting from Kraai River. The earlier comments provided by Qing concerning rhebok-headed men who "live in rivers" (Orpen 1874:2) certainly referred to the Melikane painting, and his later remarks that the "men with rhebok's heads, Haqwé and Canaté (and Quequete)....live mostly under water" correspond too closely to those made earlier for Qing to have been referring to one of the other paintings.

Haqwé, Canaté (and Quequete) are, moreover, not names of specific individuals, as Lewis-Williams has suggested, but of *classes* of individuals. This is indicated by Qing's use, further in the sentence, of the one word "Gwequeté" (Qweqweté) to refer to the five tailed men in the upper Mangolong painting. The only possible explanation for this is that Qing was referring to a class of people (probably, as I shall argue, participants in two kinds of initiation ceremonies), and that Gwequeté (Qweqweté) is the name of this class. Qing was thus telling Orpen that the Melikane painting depicted three classes of people, one of which, Quequete (or variants of this spelling) was also depicted in the upper Mangolong painting.

A closer look at the posture and dress of the figures depicted in the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings as well as a reconsideration of Qing's comments on these paintings is also warranted in order to assess whether they can be related to Nguni and Sotho, rather than San, ceremonial dress, ritual practice and religious ideology. Botha and Thackeray (1987) have pointed out that there is a close correspondence between the postures of the figures in the Melikane painting and the posture adopted by a Zulu "witchdoctor" (probably a diviner who is instructing initiates) photographed by Kidd in 1904 (see their fig. 1), and these authors note that Xhosa diviners (*amagqirha*) adopt the

same posture on occasion, supporting themselves with two sticks. Sorcerers (*amaqwirha*) also carry two sticks when they are practising witchcraft (Botha and Thackeray 1987). The posture of the Melikane figures is, moreover, also characteristic of male Xhosa initiates while being painted prior to a public ceremony, during which individuals danced and simulated the appearance and behaviour of animals (Pers. comm. to Thackeray by L. J. Botha, cited in Thackeray 1986c). The similarities in the postures of the figures depicted in the Melikane painting, on the one hand, and the postures of the Zulu "witchdoctor", the Xhosa *amagqirha* as well as male Xhosa youths at initiation, on the other, suggest that these people are associated in some way.

While it is often argued that all the therianthrope figures in the art, such as those at Melikane, represent San shamans metamorphosed in trance and symbolically linked to those animals with which they have fused (Lewis-Williams 1981, 1986; Lewis-Williams and Dowson 1988), it is likely that the Melikane figures, as well as certain other therianthropes depicted in the art, represent ritual functionaries, possibly Sotho or Nguni rather than San, who have adopted ceremonial dress consisting of the skin and head of an antelope. There is evidence for the wearing of such ceremonial dress by southern African peoples as well as for the depiction of these headdresses in the art. Walton (1957:279) has remarked that Sotho ritual functionaries wear animal-head masks, and *basuoe* (singular-*mosuoe*), the circumcisers and teachers of the male initiation lodge, were known to wear these masks, according to Basotho interviewed by Walton (James Walton pers. comm.). The assertion that masks made of animal heads were worn by Sotho *basuoe* is supported by information given to me by two Sotho men. One of these informants (a very old man, who had been a *mosuoe* himself) remarked that masks made of the heads of antelope and other animals were worn on occasion by Sotho ritual functionaries and were particularly associated with the ceremonial dress of the *basuoe*. According to this man, these masks were made in the following way. An animal was skinned and the pelt softened and reshaped. The head was split and, after the skull of the animal had been removed, it was sewn together again. The *mosuoe* who wore the mask put his entire head into the animal's head when wearing this ceremonial costume. These masks were worn on the occasion of the closing of the lodge when the initiates were due to be re-admitted to Sotho society (Statement of Thembani, 3/3/1992, Alwyn's Kop). Another informant stated that on the day of the closing of the initiation lodge the *mosuoe* placed the horns of cattle or antelope on his head, and in the past the full heads of these animals may have been worn (Statements of Rasekhele Moeletsi, 11/3/1992 and 14/8/1992, Maphapheng.).

It may be significant not only that the Melikane figures appear to be wearing masks such as are said to be worn by the *basuoe* but also that they have adopted a stooped posture. The Sotho word *kgoko* denotes both "a great doctor/teacher" and "one who bends forward" (Thackeray 1986b). The *basuoe* are referred to as the "teachers" of the lodge as they are responsible for instructing the initiates in the secrets associated with circumcision rites. The stooped Zulu "witchdoctor" appears to be instructing diviner initiates (Botha, cited by Thackeray n.d.) and it is possible that this posture is also adopted by *basuoe* during the course of their instructing Sotho initiates.

It would probably have been symbolically appropriate, moreover, for a rhebok skin to have been worn during the circumcision ceremony. In an analysis of Nguni words incorporating the form *-za*, Thackeray (1986a) notes that this form is contained not only in the Xhosa and Zulu word for rhebok, *iliza* (plural - *amaza*), but also in other Xhosa and Zulu words related to the onset of puberty and the ability to procreate. Thackeray suggests that the common form *-za* in these words may reflect a conceptual association between them, notably in the context of growth and puberty. Ethnographic data also provides strong circumstantial evidence for the suggestion that (among some southern African groups) rhebok were associated with ritual and belief systems relating to young boys who had attained puberty (Thackeray 1986a). It could thus be argued that the rhebok skins and heads worn by the figures depicted in the Melikane painting are symbolically associated with puberty and may have been considered appropriate ceremonial dress for participants in puberty rites, including circumcision rites. This is not to suggest, however, that this would have been the only antelope whose skin and head was used as ceremonial dress in these rites.

There is other evidence which supports Sotho informants' claims that animal-head masks were worn by ritual functionaries and the argument that these headdresses are depicted in the Melikane painting. The Melikane figures closely resemble a so-called "buck-jumper" photographed by W.H.C. Taylor in about 1934 in the north-eastern Cape Province (see Thackeray 1993 fig. 1). This photograph shows an individual (the late date suggests he is Sotho-Tswana, or perhaps southern Nguni, rather than San) bending forward, holding two sticks and covered by the head and skin of an antelope - probably a roan. The resemblance between this person and those depicted at Melikane is remarkable and strongly suggests that the therianthropes in the Melikane painting, as well as some of the other examples of therianthropic art, represent individuals covered with the head and skin of an antelope rather than depictions of images perceived by San shamans in trance (Thackeray 1993). The Melikane figures are depicted in a quite different manner from those therianthropes in the art which show a complete merging of human and animal



Figure 3. One of Dingaana's praisers in ceremonial dress. From Gardiner (1836).

Figure 4. Photograph of masked figures depicted in painting at Tiffin's Kloof and copied by Stow. Reproduced with the permission of Bert Woodhouse.

body parts, and which may convincingly be argued to represent a symbolic fusion of man and animal. They are painted, rather, as if they are wearing a kaross with the head of the animal attached to it, and from which the arms and the legs, which are clearly separate from the kaross, project.

It might be argued that such ceremonial dress is highly unlikely to have been worn on account of its impracticality, but Taylor's photograph of the "buck-jumper" and Burchell's encounter with "Old Crowhead" (cited above) should make us wary of dismissing the possibility on these grounds. An eye-witness account exists, moreover, which confirms that such masks were worn in southern Africa. The following 19th century account of the headdress worn by one of Dingaan's praisers was provided by Gardiner (1836:59): "These heralds are always disguised by some grotesque attire; on this occasion one of them was so completely in the attire of a panther, his own eyes piercing through the very holes in the skull, and his neck and shoulders streaming with long lappets of the same fur that he had no resemblance to a human being" (see fig. 3).

Conclusive evidence for the depiction of animal-head masks in San art comes from the San themselves. Paintings of people who are unarguably wearing masks made of the entire heads of antelope, some of which have been pushed up so that they are resting on top of the figures' heads, were recorded by Stow (1930, plates 13 and 14). These paintings from Tiffin Kloof in the Queenstown district have recently been relocated, and photographs taken of them (see fig. 4) show that Stow's copies of the figures wearing antelope-head masks are accurate (Woodhouse 1992). The masks that they are wearing appear to have lappets of skin attached to them which are similar in some respects to those attached to the mask worn by Dingaan's praiser. Similarly, many other animal-headed figures in the art may represent people wearing masks made of the heads of wild animals or cattle, although I do not argue that they all represent Bantu-speakers.

All the above evidence appears to confirm accounts provided by Walton's and my informants concerning the use of animal-head masks by the *basuoe*. These masks almost certainly were made and worn, and the paintings copied by Stow and relocated by Woodhouse confirm that masks are depicted in the art. The possibility that some of the therianthropic figures depicted in the art, including those in the Melikane painting, represent masked Sotho or Nguni ritual functionaries should therefore be taken into account in our analyses of the paintings.

Another of the paintings commented upon by Qing, that from upper Mangolong, appears to depict Bantu-speakers in ceremonial dress. Three of the figures in this painting are holding knobkerries and may be carrying assegais, which suggests that they are Bantu-speakers - perhaps Phuti. Bleek's /Xam informants identified them as Bantu-speakers when shown Orpen's copy of the painting (Bleek 1874:12) and the small round objects attached to their heads are possibly the inflated gall-bladders of sacrificed cattle worn in ritual contexts. The spots on the body of one of the tailed figures are similar to those painted on the bodies of *abakwetha*, Nguni initiates (see Hammond-Tooke 1974 plate 10; Parsons 1982: 35). Bleek remarked of the upper Mangolong painting that the "caricatured style in which these Kafirs are drawn, with their tail-like dresses made so long as to give them quite an amphibious appearance, is very remarkable" (Bleek 1874:13) and he suggested that the artist intended to satirise Bantu-speakers portrayed in the painting. The tails may, however, represent the ceremonial costume of participants in Sotho circumcision rites. They are too long and broad to be real animal tails such as have been reported as being worn by both San and Bantu-speakers, and are clearly manufactured items of dress. It is quite possible that they represent the dress of the *babineli*, the companions of male Sotho initiates who have assumed ceremonial costume and thereby become the *liphiri* or "wolves" of the lodge. The *babineli* (whose task it is to look after the initiate, teach him initiation songs and help him compose his own praise-song) dress up in "a flowing grass costume with a longish tail of a yellow straw colour, woven at the lodge" (Ashton 1955:51). These woven grass tails could well be depicted in the upper Mangolong painting.

Aside from the posture and dress of the figures depicted in the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings, which resemble that of participants in the initiation ceremonies of diviners and youths, Qing's comments on these two paintings also suggest links between the figures and Nguni and/or Sotho rites. Qing classed the figures in these two paintings together, and appears to have linked them to initiation ceremonies of Bantu-speakers. Both the Melikane and the upper Mangolong paintings depicted a class of people known as "Qwequete", "Quequete" or "Gweqweté", according to Qing's comments recorded in Orpen's original manuscript. In the case of the Melikane painting, two other classes were also depicted. At least one of the Melikane figures thus belonged to the class of people depicted in the upper Mangolong painting - published as "Qweqweté". I suggest that this word is a San or Seputhi version of the Xhosa word *abakwetha*, a term which refers to Xhosa initiates - either youths participating in circumcision rites or student diviners undergoing training (Broster 1981). In view of the trouble which Orpen clearly had in spelling "Qweqweté", it is also quite possible that this word is a mistranslation of *abakwetha*. Qing, who spoke Seputhi, a hybrid dialect

between Xhosa and Sesotho, could well have used this Xhosa word in his interview with Orpen. While it might be argued that he provided a Xhosa word to describe San rites depicted in the paintings, the fact that the upper Mangolong painting almost certainly portrays Bantu-speakers and that this painting is directly associated in Qing's commentary with the Melikane painting, through their common depiction of "Gweqweté" or "Quequete", suggests that a Sotho (Phuti) and/or Nguni rite may be portrayed in the Melikane painting as well as that from upper Mangolong.

The Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings were further associated with each other by Qing, who remarked that the people depicted in these two paintings "live mostly under water; they tame elands and snakes" (Orpen 1874:10). The men who are depicted in the upper Mangolong painting are thus conceptually linked to the Melikane figures in Qing's commentary, which suggests that they are equivalent in some way. Qing also remarked of the people depicted in the Melikane painting that they had "died and now lived in rivers". All these comments on the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings have been interpreted as metaphors derived from San religious ideology associated with the experiences of San shamans in trance (Lewis-Williams 1980, 1981). An alternative interpretation, which takes into account the possible expression of Phuti cosmology in Qing's comments, is that these metaphors refer to the experiences of Phuti diviners and/or their initiates in dreams and trance, and specifically to their encounters with ancestral spirits and other beings while in this state.

An integral part of the training and initiation of Nguni diviners is the capturing of a water snake (*ichanti*) for use as medicine, and a diviner and his initiates go on long journeys in dreams or trance to other worlds, including those under water, where they encounter a variety of wild animals as well as river snakes and the river people (*abantu bomlambo*) (Broster 1981; Thackeray 1988; Prins 1992). It is entirely possible that Qing was referring to these experiences, drawn from Phuti or Nguni cosmology, when he made the remarks cited above concerning people who live under water and tame elands and snakes. Rather than signifying the "possession" of animals by San shamans, as Lewis-Williams (1980) suggests, Qing's use of the word may, rather, refer to the "capture" of river snakes and animals by Nguni or Phuti diviners during an altered state of consciousness. Qing's reference to the Melikane figures as people who had "died" may thus, as Lewis-Williams (1980) has suggested, be a metaphor for trance, but this experience was quite possibly mediated by Phuti, rather than San, religious ideology.

Qing remarked to Orpen that the men with rhebok heads in the Melikane painting had been "spoilt" by certain dances. He also remarked that the men in the Mangolong

(Sehonghong) painting had been "spoilt" by a dance (called the *moqoma* by the Sotho (Orpen 1874:10)) because their noses were bleeding (curiously, none of the figures in the Mangolong painting is in fact bleeding from the nose). The people in both paintings had thus undergone a similar or identical experience in which they were "spoilt". This experience, as Lewis-Williams (1980) has argued, was probably that of trance. The fact that the men in the Melikane painting and those in the Mangolong painting both experienced trance does not, however, mean that the dances associated with the Melikane and Mangolong paintings were necessarily the same.

The term *mokoma* (plural - *bakoma*) is associated with a number of related concepts in Sotho cosmology and is the name given to Sotho ritual functionaries who divine by means of dreams or trance (Ashton 1955; Botha and Thackeray 1987). The role performed by these diviners or *bakoma* is similar to that of Nguni diviners, and the institution was probably adopted by the Sotho from these people (Ashton 1955). The word *mokoma* appears also to be associated in Sotho cosmology with the initiation rites of diviners and with the rites of male youths at puberty. *Koma* has two meanings. Its more common meaning is "a box in which snuff is kept" (Statement of Peete Moremoholo, 6/8/1992, Masitise Mission). The *bakoma* initiates take a very powerful form of snuff which causes them to feel dizzy, "see things" and sometimes collapse (Statement of Rasekhele Moeletsi, 14/8/1992, Maphapheng) and this may explain the association between *koma* and snuff. Its deep Sesotho meaning is "great secret" and it refers specifically to secret knowledge divulged only during male initiation ceremonies (Statement of Peete Moremoholo, 6/8/1992, Masitise Mission) This is evident in the Sesotho word *dikoma* which refers to the secret songs sung by Sotho youths when undergoing initiation (Guma 1967: 116).

The word *mokoma* is, therefore, probably linked not only to the circumcision ceremonies of Sotho youths but also to the initiation ceremonies of diviners, and it refers directly and specifically to the office of diviner in Sotho society. Why, then, did the Sotho give this name to the San curing dance described by Qing? Firstly, it is important to note that the dance by which the figures in the Mangolong painting were "spoilt" had a San name and was termed the *moqoma* dance by the Sotho, not the San (Orpen 1874:10). These figures are almost certainly participating in a San rainmaking ritual, as Bleek's /Xam informant, Diä !kwain, suggested (Bleek 1874 :12), and the scene probably depicts the trance experiences of San rainmakers (Lewis-Williams 1980). The Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings, on the other hand, appear to be closely connected in a number of ways with Sotho and Nguni ritual practices and the religious ideology and ceremonial dress associated with these rites. Qing at no stage directly linked the

Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings to the San trance dance which he described to Orpen (1874:10) - as he did with the Mangolong painting. The dances by which the rhebok-headed men in the Melikane painting had been "spoilt" could thus have been different in many ways from the San trance dance described by Qing. The Melikane painting, I suggest, depicts a Phuti dance associated with the initiation ceremonies of the *bakoma* and youths at puberty, in which San may well have participated, either as initiates or as ritual functionaries. The name of this dance was probably *mokoma*, derived directly from the Sotho name for diviner, and certain similarities between this dance and the San dance, particularly its association with trance experience, led the Sotho to apply the name to the San trance dance described by Qing.

I have suggested that the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings appear to be connected to Sotho and Nguni ritual practices and altered states of consciousness experienced during these rites, and it is worth briefly summarising these links.

- i) The posture of the Melikane figures is identical to that adopted on occasion by Nguni (and probably Sotho) diviners, as well as Xhosa male initiates.
- ii) A man wearing the skin and head of an antelope and apparently holding two sticks was photographed in 1934 in the northern Cape. The late date suggests that he was Sotho-Tswana or perhaps Nguni rather than San.
- iii) Animal-head masks are depicted in rock paintings, and there is evidence for the use of animal-head masks by Nguni and Sotho ritual functionaries. One of Dinga'an's praisers was observed wearing such a mask, and the *basuoe* (circumcisers and teachers) of the male initiation lodge are said by a number of Sotho informants to wear such masks.
- iv) The Sotho word for "to bend forward" is the same as that for "great doctor/teacher". The *basuoe* are known as the teachers of the initiation lodge. The equivalence of the two words may thus derive from a position adopted by the *basuoe* during the course of an initiation rite. This position may be depicted in the Melikane painting.
- v) The Melikane figures appear to be wearing masks made from the heads of rhebok, an antelope whose Xhosa name is strongly associated with the onset of puberty and the ability to procreate. This may indicate a connection between this painting and the initiation rites of Bantu-speakers.
- vi) The upper Mangolong painting almost certainly depicts Bantu-speakers - they are carrying knobkerries, the body of one of the figures is painted in a similar manner to those of *abakwetha*, they were identified by Diä!kwain as Blacks, and they are

wearing "tails" which may well represent the woven grass tails of the *liphiri*, or "wolves", of the Sotho initiation lodge.

- vii) The upper Mangolong figures are directly linked in Qing's commentary to the Melikane figures in two ways: one of the men in the Melikane painting and all the men in the Mangolong painting are classed in Orpen's original manuscript as "Quequete" or "Gweqweté", words similar to *abakwetha*, the Xhosa word for diviner initiates or youths undergoing circumcision rites; and the men depicted in both paintings were said to "live mostly under water" and "tame elands and snakes", remarks which fit well with the reported experiences of diviners and their initiates in dreams or trance. (Sotho youths at the lodge also experience altered states of consciousness induced by ingesting a powerful narcotic made of the *leshoma* bulb (Ashton 1955:49)).

The direct association which Qing made between the people depicted in the upper Mangolong and Melikane paintings suggests that the animal-headed figures in the Melikane painting are also Bantu-speakers, or that at least some of them are Bantu-speakers. It is significant that Qing did not directly link the upper Mangolong painting to that at Mangolong in his commentary - probably because the former depicts a Phuti rite involving Bantu-speakers, and perhaps San, while the latter depicts a San rainmaking rite.

San ritual functionaries are also known to have adopted a stooped posture using two sticks to support themselves (Burchell 1953 II:46) and may also have worn animal-head masks. The combined evidence presented above suggests, however, that the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings are associated with, and quite possibly depict, Phuti rites associated with the initiation of diviners and youths at puberty, in the course of which trance was experienced. These paintings, therefore, probably represent a conflation of concepts and practices related to Phuti initiation ceremonies involving apprentice diviners and youths at puberty, which may well also have been attended by Qing and other San.

The manner in which most hunter-gatherers outside the study area have been drawn into the cultural life of neighbouring farmers, as well as the strong possibility, discussed above, that some San groups participated in the rituals of the Sotho, and perhaps the Nguni, suggests that Qing's San may have participated in the rites of their Phuti allies and kin. Their understanding of these rites and the concepts associated with them is likely to have differed from that of the Phuti, however. We can expect all hunter-gatherers participating in the rituals of farmers to have brought a certain amount of their

own "ideological baggage" to these rites, with a resultant mix of ideologies, and this may well be reflected in Qing's employment of San concepts related to Cagn when expanding upon his comment that the men in the Melikane painting "were spoilt at the same time as the elands". Borrowings are clearly evident in some of the concepts which form part of !Kung religious ideology (Marshall 1962), and many San in close contact with other groups (including missionaries) have been influenced by these people and display hybrid forms of religious ideology and ritual practice (Schapera 1930). The religious ideology of San groups in close contact with the Phuti is likely to have been similarly influenced, and Qing probably drew both on his knowledge of the Phuti concepts associated with Phuti rituals, in which the San may have participated, as well as on elements of San religious ideology when commenting upon the paintings.

The establishment of symbiotic relationships between certain San and black farming communities may, moreover, help explain some of the patterns of distribution of contact paintings in the Drakensberg. Much attention has been focussed on the effects of conflict and stresses undergone by the San on the art, and variations in the complexity of imagery evident in the paintings have been interpreted within a paradigm that assumes that the ritual importance of the art and degree of complexity evident in its imagery is directly related to conflict between the San and others (Parkington et al 1986; Manhire et al 1986). Manhire et al (1986) have pointed out that paintings of cattle, sheep and horses are far more common in the southern Drakensberg than further north. They ascribe this distributional pattern to stresses induced in southern Drakensberg society by the arrival of European farmers, and argue that the imagery expressed in the paintings became more complex and the tempo of painting increased as a means of ritually dealing with these stresses. The development of symbiotic relationships between San and black farmers may, however, also explain these anomalies in the distribution of contact elements in the art as well as variations in the complexity of the imagery evident in these paintings. An alternative explanation for the disparity in paintings of domestic animals in the southern and northern Drakensberg may be that these paintings reflect particularly close relationships, based on raiding of livestock, which developed between the San and some farmer groups after the arrival of European farmers.

The Mpondo, Mpondomise, Bhaca, and particularly the Phuti, all of whom developed close relationships with the San, were settled nearer the south-western Drakensberg than the northern areas, where similar symbiotic relationships based on raiding of livestock do not, with a few exceptions, appear to have been recorded during the period of European settlement. Regional variations in the forms of relationships established between different San and black farming communities are to be expected, and

the observed distributional patterns of cattle, sheep and horses in the Drakensberg art may reflect these variations. The many paintings of cattle and horses in the southern Drakensberg may well thus reflect the involvement of San and Bantu-speakers from this area in raids on European livestock. Since most of the San bands who raided in Natal between 1845 and 1872 operated from the south-eastern Drakensberg (Wright 1971:186), one would expect to see a much greater number of paintings of cattle and horses in this area. The cattle and horses depicted are quite probably the animals stolen and traded in conjunction with the allies of the San in the south, and these paintings, rather than solely reflecting stresses in San society, may well celebrate times of abundance resulting from the capture of these animals.

The large numbers of paintings of livestock in the southern Drakensberg may also reflect a more direct influence of these farmers, including those who had kin amongst the San and regularly visited these San communities. The paintings of cattle may reflect the increased economic and ritual importance of cattle to San in this area as a result of their being drawn into particularly close relationships with neighbouring Bantu-speakers, for whom cattle are of great cultural significance. Black farmers allied or related to the San may, moreover, have suggested to the San that they portray cattle in their paintings, perhaps during the course of joint celebrations following successful raids such as have been documented as having occurred amongst the San and Bhaca (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976). Bantu-speakers could even have executed some of the paintings of cattle and horses themselves, joining the San while they painted, as Mapote and his 'half-Bush' stepbrothers are known to have done.

The complexity of imagery evident in the southern Drakensberg paintings has been attributed to an elaboration of ritual practice, resultant upon stresses induced by the arrival of European farmers (Manhire et al 1986). An additional factor which may explain this elaboration of ritual is the influence which southern Nguni and Sotho communities are likely to have had on the less structured San communities with whom they were in close contact. Prins (1991) has pointed out that, according to Mary Douglas (1970), highly structured social groups set a high value on symbolic performance, characterised by an elaboration of ritual practice. The influence of Nguni and Sotho societies on the San communities with whom they collaborated in cattle raids may well have induced such an elaboration of ritual practice, and this may account, at least in part, for the increased complexity of imagery apparent in the southern Drakensberg paintings.

Historical evidence, as well as much data drawn from oral traditions of the southern Nguni and Sotho, indicates that alliances, friendships and marriage ties were

established between many San communities and individuals and black farmers over hundreds of years, and the establishment of such ties was almost certainly reflected in exchanges of concepts and customs associated with the religious ideology and ritual practices of the different groups. These exchanges would, in turn, be expressed in the art, whether it is was executed by San, Sotho-San or Nguni-San artists, and may preclude the use of some of Qing's comments on the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings to demonstrate a unanimity between the cognitive systems of the Maluti San, the 19th century /Xam San and !Kung San presently living in the Kalahari. A re-interpretation of Qing's comments on the Melikane and upper Mangolong paintings, as well as analysis of the paintings themselves, suggests that these and many other paintings in areas where contact between the San and black farming communities was prolonged and symbiotic may reflect cosmologies and ritual practices different in many ways from those currently drawn upon to interpret the art.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSION

Central to this historical overview and analysis of forms of relationships documented as having characterised interaction between south-eastern San and black farming communities, or which are hypothesised as having characterised such interaction, are two related issues: the extent to which there exists a congruency between the ethnic background of the interacting groups and identification with specific social and cultural traits and a particular mode of production; and the extent to which interaction between southern African communities was characterised by co-operation rather than conflict.

These two issues have formed the focus of the Kalahari revisionist debate. This debate is similar in many ways to that initiated by studies of interaction between European farmers and indigenous communities occupying the Cape frontier in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, which deal with the same issues. On the one hand, some historians such as Giliomee (1979:431) have argued that "the frontier was as much a place where disparate groups attempted to maintain existing conditions and institutions as one in which .....new modes of life and new institutions originated". These historians have suggested that where cross-racial alliances were established they were mainly temporary and opportunistic in character, disintegrating after a short period with great rapidity. On the other hand, historians such as Macmillan have emphasised the power of trading relationships, in particular, to break down barriers between groups, with the consequent formation of social, economic and political alliances between the groups and a blurring of racial distinctions (Kallaway 1982:143). Other historians, while recognising conflict between European farmers and other groups as primary, have argued that the tendency to analyse structures of domination and conflict in racial terms and the assumption that conflict and co-operation occurred along unambiguously racial lines ignores the existence of the many co-operative relationships established at the frontier, and, in particular, cross-racial alliances based on class (Legassick 1989). It has been further argued that the tendency to analyse different societies in terms of race has resulted in the many areas of cultural overlap between supposedly distinct ethnic groupings, including San and Bantu-speakers, being ignored (Legassick 1989:365).

In his study of Xhosa groups living in the vicinity of the Orange River between 1790 and 1820, Kallaway (1982) suggested that these opposing views of interaction at

the frontier can both be shown to be valid within the context of Xhosa society of this period, but for different groups - and the same might be said for interaction between the south-eastern San and black farming communities. Relationships between some southern Nguni and Sotho groups and some San communities appear to have been characterised largely by conflict, and the boundaries between these groups were relatively impermeable. In such cases conservative social and political forces may have been generated, with relatively little acculturation of San occurring in these areas until the San were forced to assimilate with Nguni, Sotho and other communities.

In many other cases, however, the membrane between hunter-gatherer and farmer groups was clearly permeable, permitting a considerable degree of social osmosis. Unlike the European farmers, who almost without exception appear to have considered themselves the cultural superiors of the other groups that they encountered, and who were generally "bent on excluding them from their culture and kinship network and from their political system" (Giliomee 1979:433), Nguni and Sotho society contained mechanisms for the incorporation of outsiders. They were essentially open societies which, through intermarriage and other means, incorporated and eventually integrated people from other groups, whose descendants, in time, became fully-fledged members of these societies. It was, moreover, not only Khoi and San who were incorporated into Nguni society, but also Europeans. As Wilson (1979) points out, many European survivors of shipwrecks, as well as traders and adventurers married into Nguni groups and were fully integrated into these communities.

Strangers seem generally to have been welcomed into Nguni society as they added to the power and dignity of the chief, particularly when they did not seek to be absorbed in large groups which might threaten the chief's authority (Wilson 1979). In at least some cases, they acquired a particular status on account of their supposed supernatural powers, such as their reputed ability to make rain. This did not only apply to San incorporated into southern Nguni and Sotho society, but also to other outsiders who came to live amongst these communities. Thus a "black of Malabar", a survivor of a Portuguese ship wrecked in 1593 who had married into the Nguni, was reputed to have "made rain" for his adoptive community (Wilson 1979:53). Similarly, the 19th century Mpondo chief, Faku, considered the Wesleyan missionaries great rainmakers, and, much to their dismay, allocated them a particularly arid spot in which to establish their mission amongst his people in 1830, hoping thereby to attract rain to this area (Shaw 1872:259).

South-eastern San society, likewise, appears to have been relatively open. While the general tendency over time was for San to be incorporated into the larger, more powerful and encapsulating black farming communities, it was quite feasible for farmers

to be incorporated into San communities. Accounts of groups composed predominantly of San, but including members of Nguni society or Nguni-San half-castes (Lister 1949:118; Macquarrie 1962:29; Orpen 1964:319; Wright 1971:56) suggest that the San were willing to absorb outsiders. Such access to San society is likely to have been greatly facilitated by kinship links with these people, as has been mentioned. Stanford's Thembu informant, Silayi, and his two companions, for example, gained access to San society through the kinship links existing between one of his companions and Madolo's San (Macquarrie 1962:31).

In view of the fluidity of the social boundaries between many south-eastern San groups and those black farming communities with whom they were in symbiotic contact, it is almost impossible to assign a uniform package of traits to those south-eastern hunter-gatherer groups labelled "Bushmen", "Bosjesmans", "Batwa", "Baroa" etc in the historical and traditional record. Such categorisation is, moreover, greatly complicated by the documented overlap in the economic systems of certain southern-eastern San and Bantu-speaking groups. People termed "Batwa" or "Baroa" by Bantu-speakers were clearly perceived as different in some senses from those applying these names, and those to whom these names were applied no doubt often perceived themselves as different in certain ways from Bantu-speakers. But it would be incorrect to assume that, because these differences existed, a considerable degree of overlap in the social, economic and cultural systems of some south-eastern San and Bantu-speakers did not exist, or that such overlap was so small as to be of no real significance. A much neglected section of the "Venn diagram" which represents the various societies within the area occupied by the south-eastern San has been the portion which lies at the very centre - the area representing the mutual influence of these communities on each other's political, social, cultural and cognitive systems. The last-mentioned area of overlap is likely to be particularly important, as I have argued, for our understanding of the rock art.

It is appropriate, I believe, to conclude this thesis with an account of friendship between Sotho and San related by Azariel Sekese. According to this tradition, the young goatherds of the Makhoakhoa amused themselves while looking after their animals in the mountains by fashioning figurines of cattle from clay. When they brought in their flocks that evening, they left these clay sculptures where they had been grazing their animals, intending to collect them the following day. Unbeknown to them, however, they had been observed making these figures by the "Baroa" and when they returned to retrieve their toys they found them where they had left them, but also, placed amongst them, a number of beautifully fashioned figurines - not of cattle, but of eland. In the words of Monica Wilson: "Conflict in societies persists, but the lines of cleavage are not constant: sooner or later, he who was once a stranger becomes a brother".

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## NOTE

Copies of the Thackeray manuscripts have been deposited in the Archaeology Department, University of Cape Town.

## APPENDIX

### ORAL DATA - SOTHO INFORMANTS

#### 1 BACKGROUND

During the course of two visits to Lesotho in 1992 I conducted a number of interviews with Sotho informants. Many of these people were Phuti, and they were generally older people living in or close to Quthing and Mount Moorosi or in villages bordering the Seapala River. Oral tradition indicates that these are areas where close ties were established between the Sotho and the San. The Seapala area was specifically mentioned by Mopote Moorosi, How's (1962) informant, as well as by Phuti informants interviewed by Paul Ellenberger in 1959, as being an area where residual San were to be found until well into this century. Many Phuti live in this area and, as I was particularly interested in relations established between this group and the San, I considered that the area between Quthing and Mount Moorosi as well as the Seapala River Valley would be suitable areas in which to conduct my research into Sotho-San relations.

Two schoolteachers, who were proficient in both Sesotho and English, acted as my interpreters. The majority of my interviews with Sotho informants were recorded both on magnetic tape and by means of fieldnotes. It sometimes happened that I did not have my tape-recorder with me when I encountered an informant and on these occasions only notes were taken. All informants were encouraged to indicate when they did not know the answer to a question rather than provide information of which they were not completely certain.

In conclusion it should be said that I received an overwhelmingly friendly reception from almost everyone I wished to interview. My interpreters, as well as my informants and their kin and friends in the villages I visited, went out of their way to help in the recovery of an aspect of their heritage and history which they recognised as being both neglected and in danger of being irretrievably lost.

## 2 SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTED DURING THE COURSE OF MY INTERVIEWS WITH SOTHO INFORMANTS.

### A) "BAROA" AT HA RAISA

A residual hunter-gatherer community appears to have lived in rock shelters near Ha Raisa until about 1918. (Ellenberger and Macgregor remark that Raisa, who was a young boy at the time of the Difaqane [1912: 191], had a San wife, as did his grandfather, Setlho [1912: 22]. San fought with Setlho against the Tlokoa during the Difaqane [1912:134]) The Phuti chief presently living at this village stated that Baroa who occupied a rock shelter very close to his homestead formed a small community which was in close contact with the Phuti, sometimes being provided with food by them but also hunting and gathering for subsistence. They spoke Seroa (defined by informants as a language with many clicks associated specifically with the Baroa). They did not cultivate crops or keep livestock, but used bows and arrows to hunt animals, including elands. They moved from place to place following the game, but always returned to the rock shelter at Ha Raisa. They were extremely fond of smoking dagga and would ask for it from the Phuti even before they asked for food.

One of the members of this band was a woman called Maquoaka (the same name as that of the daughter of a San painter interviewed in the Tsolo District, Transkei [Jolly 1986; Lewis-Williams 1986; Prins 1990]). This woman left the shelter to stay at Ha Raisa with Raisa himself, a chief living at the time of Moorosi, and she appears to have become one of this Phuti chief's wives. According to Mosuioa Raisa, the present chief at Ha Raisa, Phuti men who married Baroa women were not required to give anything to the parents of their San wives in return for the right to marry these women. Baroa women married Phuti men, but Phuti women never married Baroa men. Maquoaka died in about 1918, and the Baroa occupied the shelter until about this time - according to Prof. David Ambrose (pers. comm.), many members of the Baroa community at Ha Raisa died in an influenza epidemic in 1919, although some were reported to have survived and continued to live in the area until the 1940s.

### B) "BAROA" AT HA MASIFA, SEBAPALA VALLEY

According to Phuti informants at Ha Masifa, the Baroa living in this village during the 20th century consisted mainly of individuals who had come from the Kokstad and Matatiele areas. Two Sotho informants mentioned that Baroa moved from Basutoland to areas near Kokstad and Matatiele during the 19th century, and one of these

informants stated that the Baroa of that area "belonged to" Adam Kok. Both Majerry and Adam, two Baroa who were said by Phuti informants at Ha Masifa to have lived in this village during this century, were said to have come from the other side of the Drakensberg. Adam was clearly linked to the Griquas and may have been a descendant of Maluti San who had gone to live in Adam Kok's territory during the 19th century. Majerry appears to have been fetched by Masifa from the southern side of the Drakensberg and appears to have become the wife or concubine of this chief.

Majerry lived permanently at Ha Masifa. Adam, on the other hand, while being strongly connected to the Phuti at Ha Masifa, wandered from place to place. They were distinguished from the Phuti in the following respects: their physical appearance; their ability to speak Seroa; their gathering of wild plant foods and insects, such as termites; their use of bow and arrows (in Adam's case); their manner of dancing (in Majerry's case). Adam and Majerry were fully accepted into the Phuti community at Ha Masifa, being regarded as Masifa's people by the Phuti, and Majerry did not like to be called a Moroa publicly. According to one informant she was not the first wife of Masifa and her sons did not become chiefs.

Aside from these Baroa individuals who came to Ha Masifa from other areas, informants also stated that a Baroa community had lived in caves in the area. After leaving the caves they went to live with the Phuti at Ha Masifa. According to one informant this happened around the turn of the 19th century. Informants were not sure how this process of incorporation had occurred.

### C) "BAROA" AT "BOLEKANA" (BLEKANA)

A small community of Seroa-speaking people were said by one informant to have lived until 1945 in her village, "Bolekana", in the Herschel District. They were based in this village but moved from place to place. In earlier times they did not possess cattle and did not cultivate crops, as they were "too lazy" to farm like other people. They depended on the Sotho and Xhosa in the village for food and housing. In later years they were given land by the chief, and some of them acquired cattle and cultivated crops. They did not have their own leaders, but fell under the authority of the chief of the area.

This Baroa community, although living amongst the Xhosa and Sotho and subject to the authority of the local chief, retained a degree of independence and practised certain customs which set them apart from Bantu-speakers. They did not intermarry with others and they had their own marriage ceremonies, according to this informant. They were

known as good herbalists and were considered to be particularly good at doctoring sick children. Roots were dug up by them to make these medicines. They subsisted partially on roots and bulbs and also, in part, by hunting - but they did not have bows and arrows. Some stayed in small huts, but none occupied caves. They spoke Seroa amongst themselves, but could also speak Sesotho and Xhosa. When fences were erected on farms in the area c. 1945 their mobility was greatly restricted and they moved to Sterkspruit.

#### E) "BAROA" INDIVIDUALS LIVING IN THE SEBAPALA VALLEY

A number of individuals considered by the Sotho to be Baroa were said to have occupied the Sebapala Valley and adjacent areas well into this century. Most were distinguished from "Coloureds" or "Hottentots" by my informants, and were believed to be related to hunter-gatherers. They were distinguished from the Sotho in one or more of the following ways: their unusual physical appearance (smallness of stature, lightness of complexion, steatopygia and texture of hair); certain of their customs (ways of dancing, games, great love of dagga); their musical instruments and songs; their proficiency as herbalists; their ability to speak Seroa (a language with many clicks); their strange pronunciation of Sesotho; and their partial retention of a hunting and gathering mode of subsistence.

A number of these people lived initially in rock shelters near Sotho villages, but were later invited to stay with Sotho families. Some of them performed tasks such as herding and milking in return for food and shelter. In those cases where they had not intermarried with the Sotho, but were nevertheless staying with them permanently, they were adopted as members of the Sotho or Xhosa families with whom they were living. While their Baroa descent was acknowledged, they were not treated differently from other members of those communities. A number of the Baroa reported to have lived in Sotho villages near the Sebapala River were said to have come from the Matatiele and Kokstad areas.

A distinctive characteristic of some Baroa individuals was their tendency to move from place to place, staying for longer or shorter periods of time with Sotho families in different areas. Stefaans, a Baroa man, known over a wide area on both sides of the Sebapala River, lived in this fashion until about 1940. According to informants, he had San features, being very short and light-complexioned. He had hair that was quite different from the Sotho, but was more like that of "Coloured" people than San, which may indicate intermarriage between his San forebears and the Griquas (he came from the

Kokstad area and one informant stated that he was a descendant of Adam Kok). Some informants stated that he spoke Seroa as well as Sesotho and/or Afrikaans. His Sesotho was described as broken, almost unintelligible, or spoken with a strange accent.

A number of informants stated that he stayed in caves from time to time and that he moved from place to place, depending upon the hospitality of Sotho families in different areas. He was not generally required to pay for food and shelter, although one informant stated that he was a good herbalist and would cure any sick members of the families with whom he stayed. Three informants stated that he hunted with bow and arrows, but others had not seen him use these weapons. Two informants said they had been told that he painted in caves, but this could not be confirmed by other informants. According to two informants, Stefaans was friendly with, and visited, other Baroa living near Mount Moorosi. These people were said to have visited Stefaans at Mafuras when he was living there, to have stayed in a cave in the area with him and to have painted with him on these occasions. One informant stated that Stefaans was visited by Baroa from other areas who spoke Seroa and possessed bows and arrows, and another that Stefaans had lived at one stage in a cave near Photomane with three other Baroa men.

Stefaans generally did not inform people in advance when he left a village, but would simply disappear. The villagers would either hear from others that he was staying in a different area or would hear nothing of him until he returned, sometimes years later. He was reported to have died at the District Chief's village, where he was apparently employed as a jockey by this chief - a number of Sotho chiefs were known to employ Baroa or their descendants as jockeys during this century (Ambrose pers.comm.)

#### F) OTHER REPORTS BY SOTHO INFORMANTS OF "BAROA" LIVING IN LESOTHO DURING THIS CENTURY

Reports of small groups of Baroa moving from village to village, as well as occasionally staying in caves, were provided by a number of informants. They were generally housed and given food by the Sotho, but were not permanently attached to any Sotho community. They were differentiated from the Sotho by their possession of some or all of the following characteristics: they spoke a language with many clicks identified by informants as Seroa; they gathered wild plants for food and hunted with bows and arrows; they had no permanent dwelling place; they were very short and fair-complexioned; they were extremely fond of dagga; and they were good curers and/or herbalists.

These people retained a considerable degree of independence from the Sotho communities occupying the areas they roamed and it was generally not possible to predict when they would arrive at or leave a village. Nobody knew where they had come from when they arrived, and when they left they did not tell anyone where they were going. They appear to have been the remnants of hunter-gatherer communities who still retained a lifeway based partly on hunting and gathering, despite the incursion of Sotho farmers into the remoter and more mountainous areas of Lesotho.

#### G) "BAROA" ARTISTS - THE TESTIMONY OF LIPHAPHANG MOJAKI

According to one Sotho informant, Liphaphang Mojaki, two young Baroa men, Pietertjie and Koos, lived with his neighbour in a small village near Ongeluksnek during the 1940s. Mojaki stated that this area was quite remote at that time and was sparsely inhabited by Sotho. These Baroa youths had been brought to the village by an old man called Hoko, according to the informant's mother, Maliphaphang. (Dornan [1909: 439] remarks that Hoko was the name of the son of a 19th century Baroa chief, while Mangoaela [1987: 42] states that Hoko was a half-caste, or "Baroa-Phuti", chief). Pietertjie and Koos spoke Seroa as well as Sesotho. They spoke Seroa to each other, but when they were with the Sotho they spoke a strangely-accented Sesotho. Mojaki remarked that other Baroa individuals he had met spoke in Sesotho with the same unusual accent. Mojaki stated that he had hunted small buck and dassies with them when he was a young boy, and Pietertjie and Koos had used bows and arrows on these occasions. They smoked dagga a great deal, according to Mojaki.

Mojaki also provided details of drawings executed by Pietertjie and Koos in caves and on rocks. They used "soft stones" of different colours to draw animals and people. The drawings were very finely executed and quite unlike children's drawings. They were "realistic" drawings of animals and people rather than "imaginary" creatures or people. According to Pietertjie and Koos the drawings of the Baroa were a form of message to other visitors to the caves containing the art, and indicated which animals and people were in the area when the drawing was done. They said that the drawings were executed in such a way that the figures and animals faced the direction in which the artists had moved off when they left the cave.

Mojaki claimed to have seen other Baroa drawing on rocks and in caves with "soft stones" on a number of other occasions. Their drawings were also finely executed and similar to those of Pietertjie and Koos. One of the places he claimed to have seen Baroa paintings was in a cave below the village of ha Mapheelle, near the Quthing River.

At the time he was herding cattle on the other side of a tributary of the Quthing, and when he saw the Baroa in the cave he crossed over the river and joined them. They were smoking dagga and drawing on the rock face of the cave. According to Mojaki, when he asked them what the drawings meant they told him that they were a form of message and that the figures in the drawings faced the direction in which they intended to leave.