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**A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE SAN OF TSHOLOTSHO DISTRICT WARD 7
AND 10 FROM THE COLONIAL ERA TO INDEPENDENCE - 2017.**

By

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Approval Form

The undersigned certify that they have supervised read, and recommended to the Midlands State University for acceptance of dissertation entitled “A social history of the San of Tsholotsho District ward 7 and 10 from the colonial era up to independence – 2017”submitted by **NOMTHANDAZO KUTHABA NDLOVU** Registration No. **R141148H** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in History and International Studies Honours Degree at Midlands State University

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Declaration

I, NOMTHANDAZO KUTHABA NDLOVU do hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work in conception and execution, and all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of direct and indirect references. I also solemnly declare that this work has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other University.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Almighty God for instilling in me the spirit of hard work for completion of what looked like a gigantic impossible task, to my mother and father Mr and Mrs S Ndlovu and my fiancé Alfred Dube and friends Crispen Moyo and Sean Kaboti for your unreserved support and love that you have forever given me.

List of acronyms

CAEDA	Creative Arts and Education Development Association
CAMPFIRE	Communal Areas Management Programme For Indigenous Resources
DA	District Administrator
NGOs	Non –Governmental Organizations
RDC	Rural District Council
TRDC	Tsholotsho Rural District Council
UN	United Nations
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People’s Union
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe’s People Revolutionary Army

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Glossary of terms

Lagisa is a form of transhumance practiced in communal areas of Matabeleland. It involves the seasonal movement of cattle from area to another in order to extend the grazing range.

Tsoro-o-sto a wild which was ate by San people on their arrival in Tsholotsho.

Tsoroyahou a large herd of elephants

San also known as Bushmen, San are the oldest inhabitants of Southern Africa it comprises of Khoisan and Khoi-Khoi, their culture was hunting and gathering they never grew crops.

Umgugudo an African traditional medicine for curing backaches

Amasili, Abakhwa other terms used by the Ndebele and Kalanga to call the San

Umlisa Ndebele leader with the tittle just below the chief in the village

Usobhuku Ndebele leader with the tittle just below the *umlisa* in the village

Abstract

This study focuses on the social life of the San people of Tsholotsho District ward 7 and 10 from the colonial era up to independence. The study seeks to bring to attention the plight of San people who as one of world's oldest indigenous groups has consistently suffered domination, discrimination, cultural assimilation by other social groups. Their history has not been documented because they have never had any contact with technology and modernization they have been widely marginalised. These indigenous people and their cultures are under the threat of extinction, as they are subjected to economic and political marginalization. The research was largely qualitative and some of crucial information was gathered from primary sources through interviews. This research reveals the evils of colonialism on the indigenous people like San people whom they stereotyped and labelled as backward, barbaric and incapable of decision making. The study analyses how the colonialist politics of indirect rule and anti-hunting laws disturbed the San livelihoods. Chapter one looked at the origins of the San people and their settlements in Tsholotsho and their socio economic lives before the colonial era. Chapter two reviewed the strategies adopted by the government working with non-governmental organisations in improving their social life and modernising them, particularly wards 7 and 10. Chapter three of this study focused on the change and continuity of the San lives after 1980.

Introductory Chapter

Zimbabwe is a habitat of the San people also known as “Amasili” “the Bushmen”. The San are a group of people who include the indigenous inhabitants of Southern Africa before the southward Bantu migrations from central and east Africa reached their region which led to the displacing of the Bantu people and the San becoming the predominant inhabitants of Southern Africa. The San lived by hunting animals and gathering fruits for their survival. Large numbers of the San populations remain in several arid areas in the region notably the Kalahari Desert in Botswana, Namibia and some parts of Cape Town South Africa. This study focuses on the modernization of the few San people who still live in Zimbabwe’s Tsholotsho District in Matabeleland North. It will also focus on their livelihood, modernisation of this seemingly marginalised community .Their economic and social backgrounds are considered. It also focuses on their nomadic nature how they moved from one place to the other and their way of life in the olden days up to date and the need for them to be modernised and their social life as a whole.

Statement of the problem

The remaining San people still lived according to how their ancestors lived socially, economically and politically. They are however having a hard time fitting in the modern society of technology and globalisation that we now live in. The San still hunted and gathered fruits as they believe that is what defines them. The children do not attend school as they do not see and understand the importance of education; their social life somehow needs to be restructured. These people still used herbs from roots and leaves, thus they practised the African Indigenous way in treating their illnesses and sicknesses. Some of them even get sick to the extent of dying even after taking their herbs but still not recognising the necessity of going to the hospital as they believe it is against their

culture. They do not have any source of income since they are not employed .Thus the study is set at revealing where the San community is lacking socially, and where the government needs to help improve their lives by bringing modernity to the San Communities in Tsholotsho .It must be noted that the San are very few and in a community they are a ratio of 4 out of about 20 households, thus other community members do not associate much with them, they discriminate them and are constantly reminded of how different from the other members in the society who are non-San. That is where the marginalisation problem erupts from, them being neglected in the society.

Objectives of the study to:

- Analyse if the San community understand what bringing modernity to them is all about.

- Analyse the social life of the San people in Tsholotsho.

- Assess role of government since independence and to analyse whether their interventions were beneficial or harmful to the San people

Research Questions

1. Why are the San people reluctant to change and moving with the times?
2. Why do other members of the community avoid social interaction with the San families?
3. Does the San community believe that modernization is about diluting their culture?
4. Does the San community realise and understand the importance of modernisation that is being introduced to them in terms of education and their health?

Historical background of the San

The ancestors of the San people are considered to be the first inhabitants of what is now called Botswana and South Africa. Their historical presence in Botswana is evident in Northern Botswana Tsodilo Hills region, where rock art paintings and stone tools date back to over 70 000 years. The San are traditionally nomadic people, moving seasonally within certain areas with the availability of water and edible plants and game animals. In the 1950s the San in Botswana switched to farming due to modernisation programs mandated by the government. It should be brought to light that the other place of origin of the San is Northern Cape; these San from Northern Cape are descended from two tribes, an amalgam of the original San hunter-gatherers and the later arriving. They were virtually annihilated by the subsequent settlers. However the San culture lives on through some of the most compelling rock art on earth. These San people lived by hunting using bow and arrows. Before the hunt the shaman would conduct a religious ceremony and they would enter a trance and his vision recorded on a rock by way of painting. The distinct click of their language once found nowhere else in Africa has been incorporated to Zulu and Xhosa speech. However due to human migration and Bantu expansion the San found in Botswana and Eastern Cape were displaced to parts of Zimbabwe like Tsholotsho and Plumtree near the Botswana boarder.

Methodology

The researcher used questionnaires, desktop research, newspapers, articles and journals for getting the information that was needed for the dissertation. Valid and satisfactory information that the researcher needed was acquired through the use of qualitative questionnaires that involved every relevant member of the community to be questioned. Oral interviews were carried out, interviewing both the elderly and children who are the San and non San in the community. The researcher also used desktop research and read online on the information that the internet provided on the social life of the San people in Tsholotsho

District and getting different views of other scholars on this issue. The use of internet was fast and very convenient whereas in the past data collection used to require many hours of tracking on the library shelves. According to Xaquin new technology has revolutionized this world in a way that having an internet connection is frequently the only requirement to access secondary data.¹ Journals, Newspapers and Articles helped the researcher to find out the historical background, the origins and social life of the San in Tsholotsho that was written by other sources and scholars.

Literature Review

The San like many indigenous people in the world live in the situation of marginalization and discrimination. San peoples' history has emerged as one of most interesting field of study amongst researchers and cultural historians. There is little information on their history and the intention of this research is to increase on what other researchers have already written about the San history. Most information is known by the elderly in the community; each death of these elders means a loss of critical historical information that ought to be shared. However several researchers such as Madzudzo and Hitchcock, have undertook to research about the San people in Southern Africa but they do not say much about San history during colonial era in Zimbabwe. My research seeks to trace San people s social way of life and their history in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe up to date. The researchers have faced a brick wall as the San population has mixed with the Kalanga and Ndebele, leading to the loss of their language, culture and livelihood.

Ndlovu says that, out of approximately two thousand San population in the country only estimated fourteen can fluently speak the Tshwao language.² The San do not use Tshwao language in their day to day interactions preferring Ndebele and Kalanga as their vernacular languages. This process began during the colonial time when the San were not allowed to

hunt, and they turned to Ndebele and Kalanga for food. It is here they were required to speak in Ndebele or Kalanga so that they got food. Their language is unique for its click sound. Language is the carrier and residue of a culture. Viriri says that minority languages are endangered as the educational system does teach them because of the dominance of Ndebele and Shona.³ Davy Ndlovu director of CAEDA, points out that whilst conducting research the elderly preferred to speak in Kalanga and Ndebele only a few preferred using their mother language. This shows that their language is slowly fading away. Madzudzo, the major challenge threatening the San culture is that they have no written records, so the loss of language could be permanent if nothing is done soon.⁴ The importance of these previous researches is that, this research will depend on them when analysing the importance of language in the development of any society or ethnic group.

Lack of protective legislation has been one of the factors that have haunted the San since the days of colonial rule. Davison highlights that, before the enactment of the Game and Preservation Act in 1929, the San were living in the area that this Act designated as Hwange Game Reserve.⁵ The San hunted freely in this area wildlife was in abundance and meat is one of the permanent features of their diet as they are known of majoring in hunting and gathering fruits. This Act prohibited human settlement in areas designated as game reserves thus, they relocated to the nearest place that is Tsholotsho.⁶ This was a major upset to the San as hunting did not only augment their diet but, they bartered meat in exchange for the grain with the Ndebele and Kalanga communities this brought about a very huge change in their social life. This place was very rich in tubers and many herbs which ate and helped to maintain their health and diet. Their knowledge on the environment has given them reputation as good wildlife trackers. These colonial policies greatly affected the San who had hitherto relied on hunting for their survival. The San were not really poachers in the worst sense, just like a pride of lion, they killed for their own needs, only when it was necessary, amounting to not

more than one animal per week. However the law had come and it had to be implemented and it came with a lot of life changing changes. The San used traditional hunting methods such as arrows and spears, snares; they did not really threaten wildlife because they had long survived this way. Thus this situation forced the San to work in fields and herd the cattle of the Ndebele and the Kalanga in exchange for the grain. This will benefit this research in the sense that the San survival depends heavily on other social groups and it is the reason why there is bad blood between the Kalanga and San people and somehow led to the San being neglected and treated badly in the society.

Keitseope Nthomang asserts that they are known to be the “first people” on the African subcontinent over the centuries, been hunted, persecuted and driven off their traditional lands by the more assertive tribes to the point where they now generally live in landless poverty.⁷ This evidently shows that the San communities have been treated as minorities and people who do not matter by other people in the society to the extent that they have been deprived of their ancestral lands. When Nthomang says they have been hunted, the term hunted is enough to show that other members of the society do not see them as humans but as animals thus neglecting, abusing and marginalising them as human beings also. Nthomang goes on to shed on the way of life of the San, he further goes on to say they had strong links to territories, strong identification with the land on which they carry out their traditional ways of life, distinct social, economic and political systems, culture and beliefs.⁸ The San prove to be people who knew their territory very well and lived their lives following accordingly to their culture and belief. Thus the San that live in Tsholotsho nowadays still prefer using roots for medication when sick, their social lives need change. This shows the great need of the interference from the government to highlight to them the need for sending their children to school so that they can be well informed in all ways of life. The government has however

taken some big steps to help the San communities fit into the modern society and do away with their marginalisation.

Conclusion

Conclusively the introduction covers what other scholars say about the social way of life of the San in Tsholotsho, their origins and movement from Hwange to Tsholotsho. It also shows how the San have been mistreated by the other groups they had to share the land with the Ndebeles and the Kalangas. It clearly shows that the San need change especially in education and their welfare. Thus the government of Zimbabwe must do something to help the “Bushmen”. Furthermore it is vital in this modern world for everyone to be educated in all means possible so that they can survive. The San used to survive by hunting and gathering fruits however times have changed, they need to indulge in planting crops and income generating projects. Thus it can be safely said that the San community in Tsholotsho does need to be modernised to eliminate their marginalisation.

Chapter 1

The origins and the lifestyle of the San people in Zimbabwe up to how they settled in Tsholotsho and their socio-economic way of life before the colonial era.

Chapter 2

Strategies adopted by the government of Zimbabwe in uplifting the social life and modernising the San in Tsholotsho District ward 7 and 10 .These include the introduction of Education, Health and income generating projects. This chapter focuses on the role played by the government and the NGOS in their interventions to assist the San people. NGOs have assisted the San people in the health, education and food security spheres; however some development projects have failed to work because of dependency syndrome.

Chapter 3

Change and continuity of the San social lives, made by the government after 1980 in a bid to empower the San in ward 7 and 10. The aim of this chapter is to give the current status of San social data. Data on San population, religion, lack of health and education and linguistic situation will also be discussed. The treatment of San people by fellow groups and problems they face in their attempt to integrate and diversify with other groups. San status has also affected their access to resources and they continue to wallow in poverty, neglected from development and the changes that the government has brought about.

END NOTES

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CHAPTER 1: Origins and lifestyle of the San people in Zimbabwe

1.1 Introduction

This chapter is about where the San people who settled in Tsholotsho originated from and their lifestyle which includes rock art. This chapter will then dwell on exploring the implications of colonial rule on the San livelihoods. Social and economic consequences of colonial legislations to the San livelihood will be discussed in detail. Colonialists had so much hatred for the nomadic lifestyle of San people, and this was shown by the legislations they adopted whose purpose was to destroy the San culture of hunting and gathering. Laws that forbade hunting destabilized the San community as their source of livelihood was taken. The chapter will also focus on the San way of life before, during and after the colonial era up to date in detail.

1.2 The San and Rock Art

The main reason for the dismissal of rock art, rhymed with now infamous assertion of Hugh Trevor-Roper, that there was no African history, but rather history of Europeans in Africa, that Africa was a dark continent.⁹ Such allegations are misleading and inspired by subjective analysis. Elspeth Parry an amateur archaeologist also dismissed the rock art in Matopo hills as meaningless.¹⁰ The descendants of the San are the only people who can understand and interpret the meaning of the rock art as it is their drawings, and this has contributed greatly in the process of revival of San history.

It is interesting that one can actually get to analyse and visualise generally how the San lived by looking at their drawings/ rock art which is still vivid in various monumental places

scattered around the country. The rock art carried elements, of San social, economic and religious life. Mostly important San showed themselves as hunters and gathers, most of their drawings show San men hunting various kinds of animals for their survival. Mlambo emphasizes that, this rock art depicted human activities such as hunting and dancing, while some seem to symbolize spiritual beliefs.¹¹ This rock art has largely sustained the common outlook of San as hunters and gathers. The large African Antilopes was the most important in San community as shown by its appearance in many San rock paintings around the country, such as Matopo Hills.

1.3 Origins of the San

The historic San people are believed to be the first people to live in Southern Africa since ancient times. Crawhall, says that they share the same origins with the Khoe-khoe (previously known as Hottentots) having adopted sheep pastoralist several thousand years ago and then expanding across the whole subcontinent.¹² The ancestral San made Southern Africa rich by their historic rock art paintings. Hitchcock and Biesele bring about to light that, in the East, San and incoming Bantu peoples mixed and intermarried and the latter adopted the click sounds of the Khoisan languages. In the western part of the subcontinent, however, San and Khoi retained their autonomy.¹³ Hitchcock and Lee further highlights that, in the early years of the Common Era, proto-Bantu-speaking peoples crossed the Zambezi River and began their famous southward migration that led to the formation of the powerful Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, and Sotho chiefdoms whose descendants form the large majority of South Africa's population today.¹⁴ Their lives changed after the arrival of the Jan Van Riebeck of Dutch East India Company in 1652 to settle in what is present day Cape Town in South Africa.

The San clashed more often with the Dutch who had settled in their territory and the expansionist policy of Dutch East India Company (VOC) was met with considerable hostility

from the San people. The main reason of clash was that the Dutch wanted to exercise authority and power over the San people and thus started allocating themselves land thus pushing the San into the more marginalized places. They did that without even considering that they had found the San settled in the area already before them. Totten says as the number of whites expanded in the region, Bushmen who engaged in raiding and attacks on settler and their “Hottentots” herders were retaliated against and “farmers and their retainers showed little mercy ... shooting down men and women and carrying children off as servants”.¹⁵ They were left with little or no choices at all, thus either move to areas that were not occupied by other groups or adapt to the new life being imposed on them or fight for their freedom. The San then decided to be resilient, Kelly says they became common as San raided and killed settler stock, slayed herders, destroyed the crops and homesteads.¹⁶ That is the relationship between the San and the Dutch became even more distasteful.

The San were hunted down, chased on the hills, shot like wild animals by a *trekboer* militants, women and children were captured. Adhikari says that, the annihilation of Cape San society during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries constitute genocide, because assimilation of captives contributed to the genocidal process as captives were effaced of their San identities.¹⁷ The assimilated San became to be known and called the Cape Colored people.

In 1795 after the coming of the British it was a period of relief in terms as Dutch –San relations cooled down but ultimately the British were oppressors in their own right after oppressing the San also. The British intended to convert the San to become agro-pastoralists to prevent San from raiding/hunting, as time proved this was to do with British benefitting from cheap labour. Kelly, highlights that the British sought to identify and appoint suitable chiefs among the San with whom they could negotiate, a popular tenet of indirect rule applied among many British colonies faltered with the San who did not have hereditary leaders.¹⁸

Kelly goes on; to settlers the San occupied the lowest rung on this racial hierarchy and in their minds lacked the basic human characteristic of language, settled life, and social organization beyond the family.¹⁹ Kelly concludes that, despite the more human British policy towards indigenes, a society within the colony was extinguished in an incremental process of encroachment, enforced labour, and periodic massacre.²⁰ Looking closely at the origins and history of the San one, can say that their history is characterized by violence, dispossession, war, racism and migration. Hitchcock and Biesele reason that, beyond the reach of Boer guns, in the Germany colony of South-West Africa and in the British protectorate of Bechuanaland, San people survived and even thrived and it is in contemporary Namibia and Botswana that most today San live in. Distance and its surrounding region, proved to be San salvation.²¹ Thus it is observational to argue that the San groups found in different countries of southern Africa are consistent ,have changed or absorbed into cultures of other powerful groups in their new environments, such that some have become pastoralists and agriculturalists. This maybe the reason why they have different names in their lands they occupy today for example in Botswana they are referred to as *Basarwa*, people without land, *San* is a Nama word, for an outsider, in Zimbabwe they are known as *Amasili/Abakhwa* or *Nkwa*, both words have derogatory connotations. Hitchcock and Biesele point out, it is estimated that they are about 80 000 San people there (Botswana and Namibia), and found in smaller groups in Angola, Zambia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The San represent for many an unspoiled “natural humanity” living in harmony with nature and the works of Laurens Van Der Post and in the films like the Gods must be crazy reinforce this romantic image.²²

Therefore this research has established that, the San people are the original inhabitants of Zimbabwe, are found in parts of Tsholotsho and Bulilamangwe respectively. According to Hitchcock, these are the two districts of Matabeleland South and North Provinces where locals refer to San as Bakwa, Batwa, Tyua.²³ In Tsholotsho the wards San people inhabit

today are named after their ancient elders and famous people in their history. Elderly informants mentioned that, e.g. Gulalikabili, was a pasture which belonged to a traditional healer called Bili, so in Kalanga *gula*, is a pasture then *likabili*, the pasture of Bili. Other names like Cawunajena, Cwijima, Xanixani, were names of late San grandfathers.²⁴ Several factors might have pulled the San to interior of Zimbabwe, which may include the vastness of the forests that harbored various types of wildlife and fruits. This idea may be linked with the heritage of rock art left by ancestral San around the Matopo Hills and other monuments.

However the penetration of the Ndebele in Zimbabwe in the early 1820s further dealt a blow to the San. The San could have probably have migrated to other areas far away from the reach of Ndebele marauding raids and authority of Mzilikazi and they seem to have co-existed. It is plausible to reason that the San were easily absorbed/ assimilated by the Ndebele, so that they would be free from the raids. One respondent Mackson Ngcoli Sibanda revealed this during the interview, that on their arrival in Zimbabwe the San were divided into five groups who took different routes into the interior, and these San groups are, *AmaGanadi* (San of the mountain), *AmaJitshwa*, *AmaXhawaxhe*, *AmaXhawuxhumi* and *AmaXhayise*. They drank water at Tshatshe around Matopo area. The San worked for Ndebele under King Mzilikazi as herd boys these were the *AbaJitshwa* and *AmaGanadi*.²⁵

1.4 The San and Ndebele- Kalanga relations

The relations between the San and Kalanga and Ndebele were further worsened by the San people's situation of hunger and poverty. Several respondents during interview discussed this subject with high levels of emotions and anger. Gogo Mvundla mentioned that what pained the San people most was that when they were evicted from Hwange, and returned to Tsholotsho they found the Ndebele and Kalanga permanently established in the places they considered theirs. And they did not own any cattle and did not even have farming land let

alone homestead. Ndebele and Kalanga looked at the San as source of cheap labour.²⁶ The San then became subjects of abuse to the Kalanga and the Ndebele as they would work and do what they were directed.

Mr Tabona Moyo, village head of Sanqinyana line who is in early 60s, complained that it was at this moment that the Tshwao language and customs were lost. When a San went to beg for food from Ndebele and Kalanga in Tshwao language they were chased away, they would be only tolerated when they spoke in Ndebele or in Kalanga. As hunger and desperation continued to terrorize the San, their options closed, they started to copy Ndebele and Kalanga in everything including their social life. Speaking isiNdebele and Kalanga therefore became prerequisite of acquiring food. Even at the meetings that were held the San sat on the ground they not allowed to seat on stools. A fight broke out when an elderly San man was asked to give the seat to a younger Ndebele man, tempers heated up. The San did not stand a chance at village courts when pitted against either Ndebele or Kalanga, they were always wrong and on the other hand the Ndebeles and Kalangas right. One can safely argue that desperation and food insecurity caused by anti-hunting laws accelerated the process of cultural assimilation and it somehow destroyed the Ubuntu of the San people.

One male respondent blamed the women for accelerating the process of language loss, when they married Ndebele man. Women spoke to their children in either Kalanga or Ndebele language they refused to teach their children in Tshwao language, as the language was now associated with poverty.²⁷ The San man therefore never had opportunity to marry from either Ndebele or Kalanga women due to their poverty they were neglected and only married amongst each other.

1.5 The San Settlements in Tsholotsho

The change that came with the colonialists regarding wildlife laws influenced the San people to migrate to new areas in search of greener pastures. Places like Cawujena, Xhanixhani, Mgodimasili, Gulalikabili, Gariya and Gibixhegu in Tsholotsho indicate the San ancestry there. The San could probably have moved to Tsholotsho for various reasons that may include abundance of wildlife and better livelihoods. Even when the Game and Preservation Act of 1929 took effect, the San found it easy to resettle in Tsholotsho for reasons such as that they hunted stray animals from the nearby Hwange National Park. History has it that the San were attracted by huge herds of elephants, *Tshoroyahou*, in Tshwao language. It is logical to assume that the name Tsholotsho was derived from *Tshoroyahou*. However Christopher Dube, differed with this idea, he reasoned that the name Tsholotsho came from a rotten fruit they ate called *tsoro-o-sto* in Tshwao, *igoba* in Kalanga, *mnangalala* in isiNdebele.²⁸

The way the Africans settled does not reflect their interests instead they show the interests of the colonialists. Ethnicity was the strategy used by the colonialists to divide Africans into ethnic groups and they tended to favour one group at the expense of other groups. The favoured group was usually showered with several privileges and exemptions that underprivileged them, such that Chiefs and headman were chosen from these groups. The nature of San society did allow them the opportunity to have an outright leader, everything was shared equal and rather there the head of families. Crawhall propounds that, colonial administrators were frustrated that hunters and gathers had no centralized leadership.²⁹ This meant that the San were not bound by any laws, they were not controlled by anyone and thus the settlers could not control them too. They had the freedom of movement they could move to everywhere they wanted to be without being answerable to anyone. So the only way the colonialists could defeat the San was under the rule of the Ndebele and the Kalanga. During

the 1960s in Nyamandlovu area, evictions of Africans for purposes of land occupation by whites forced the San into deeper into Tsholotsho in faraway places. Those evicted were resettled in Tsholotsho and that meant that the San had to move. The San had to live very near as neighbours of the Ndebele and Kalanga in Tsholotsho. This was very hard for the San because coexisting within Ndebele and Kalanga communities did not only accelerate the process of cultural assimilation but destroyed San's autonomy and social life too.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter was an analysis of the origins of the San people and it was observed that the San are the original inhabitants of Zimbabwe and they originated from Botswana. It is intriguing that the San people throughout the whole of Southern Africa have faced more or the less the terrifying conditions, of war, dispossession, slavery, genocide and marginalization. The same conditions that drove the San out firstly South Africa, then Botswana, are the same conditions they encountered in Zimbabwe. The San were harassed by the arrival of Bantu groups into Zimbabwe and these groups who became agro-pastoralists, pushed the San to the marginal lands, and occupied the land the San felt was theirs. The coming of colonialism in Zimbabwe in 1890 was a catalyst in the destruction of San livelihoods. The institutionalization of anti-hunting laws did more to destroy the autonomy of San people. When hunting was forbidden the San returned to Ndebele and Kalanga thus, starting a process of cultural assimilation. The next chapter will study government's strategies and role played by NGOs in assisting the San people in Tsholotsho San villages in ward 7 and 10.

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CHAPTER 2: Strategies adopted by the government of Zimbabwe in uplifting the social life and modernising the San in Tsholotsho.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is about how the San life was before the interference of the government in their society before Zimbabwean independence in 1980. The steps, the strategies that the government and the NGOs have taken after independence in improving the social life and status of the San people in Tsholotsho Rural District. The chapter goes on in revealing the educational need there is in the San communities and need for clinics in Tsholotsho. Schools and clinics have been constructed in a bid to improve the San lives and also some income generating projects implemented by the NGOs.

2.2 The San way of life before 1980

During the colonial times in the late 1920s, there were scattered groups of the Tshwa that lived in what is now called Hwange National Park. The San survived by hunting animals, gathering wild fruits and roots from trees as their diet. The San were not wasteful and every part of the animal was used. The hides were tanned for blankets and the bones are cracked for the marrow.³⁰ The San hunter-gathers were a Stone Age people. They did not use metals, their weapons were made of wood, stone and bones. They did not domesticate animals and did not cultivate crops. No pottery was made, instead they used ostrich egg shells for storing and holding water. The San had no formal authority figure or chief, but govern themselves by group consensus. Disputes were resolved through lengthy discussions where all involved have a chance to make their thoughts heard until some agreement is reached.³¹ This shows that somehow the San were/are intelligent people who knew how to settle their disputes in an orderly manner.

Leadership among the San was kept for those who have lived within that group for a long time, who have achieved a respectable age, and good character.³² This shows that the San do respected the elderly in their community as the elderly are much wiser and thus are the ones to lead the others. Water was hard to come by, as the San were constantly on the move for a better place to settle. Usually during the dry season, these migrants collected their moisture by scraping and squeezing tree roots so that they could collect the tiniest drop of water they could get. If they are out hunting or travelling, they would dig holes in the sand to find water that would ooze from underground, usually those sandy places they got water from would be situated near a river or a dam that had dried out. They also carried water in big ostrich eggshells as their source of container and huge delicacy was done there so that they do not break the eggshells. These are the major practises that the San lived their everyday life, young children would grow up to be hunters of animals for boys and girls be gatherers of fruits.

It must be noted that the White settlers did not do any kind of development in the San areas. The colonizers that are the White government did not tolerate the difference between the foraging San and largely agro-pastoralists Ndebele and Kalangas. The Ndebele and Kalanga inherited pastoralism from their ancestors. On the other hand the San other than any other ethnic group had always depended on environment for their survival. European colonization policies worked well in already organized societies and the main reason for colonizing Africa was for looting raw materials to suffice the industrial revolution. Ake highlights that to achieve this Europe needed to rule over already organized African societies and later create a system of taxation which would break down independent African economies and force people into European controlled labour and commodity markets.³³ This is evident that the White settlers were after running the whole of Rhodesia and they never developed the San areas in any way. One respondent narrated in folkloric manner, that a white man called Ted came and

took around with him wisest San hunters through what is now Hwange National Park. He requested the San hunters to show him the places that were most favoured by animals within the Park. The respondent went on to further to say that Ted Davidson started evicting San in 1926 requesting them to stop hunting animals.³⁴ This is how bad and unfair the relations of the Whites to the San were before 1980.

2.3 The San livelihood after 1980 to 2017

The way of the San nowadays is somehow almost the same like they used to live back then. However there have been some changes on their way of life. An elderly member of the San community Mr Vundla at Mpilo Village in Tsholotsho under the student “s interview said that several hundreds of them were moved out of the reserve which is now called Hwange National Park to South of the reserve now known as Tsholotsho Communal Lands, others to Wankie, Botswana and East of Lupane.³⁵ After the resettlement of the San to different areas they faced problems like poverty since the constitution is against hunting of animals, which is one of their main activity for getting food and being neglected and marginalised by other members of the society who are not San is also another problem. The resettlement and displacement of the San however was a blessing in disguise for those who were moved to Tsholotsho Communal lands. Upon their arrival in Tsholotsho, Mr Madlela who is the eldest of the San living in Mtshina Village said that when they got to the area there were no small animals to hunt except for elephants.³⁶ Their social life somehow got disturbed, there were no animals to hunt, they were moved to live near non San people who treated them like they are animals and called them “*Amasili*”. They got exposed to systems such as farming and using tools that are not of the Early Iron Age.³⁷

However it should be noted that regardless of living in the same society with the Ndebeles and Kalangas in villages such as Mgodimasili, Mtshina, Mpilo, Sifulasengwe, Gariya,

Gulalikabili, Sakhile and Thula, the “*Bushmen*” managed to still live according to their cultural life. They still did not go to the hospital whenever they fell sick, they relied on the traditional healing method, for example when one got bitten by a snake they knew the roots and tree leaves to apply on the wound and what juices to drink to neutralise the poison. Only about 1% of their children attended school and eventually dropped out of school. The San community faces a serious educational challenge with very low levels of literacy rates. Most children of the San end up dropping out of school due to shortage of funds since most of the parents are not working and have no source of income. Ndlovu said what makes the lives of the San difficult were the current laws (Parks Wild Life Act sec 43 which is against the killing of cheetahs, rhinoceros and pythons).³⁸ which prohibit any illegal hunting of animals which was their only way of livelihood.³⁹ The San had never practised crop farming thus they found it very hard to adapt to the current trends. They have no knowledge on how to farm, thus they need help from the government through resources and how to they can learn how to farm. These are some of the problems that the San community in Tsholotsho have come across from the 80s up to date. However the government of Zimbabwe is working on improving the San people's social life, so that life is made a lot easier than it has been before.

2.4 Steps taken by the government to minimise San marginalisation

One of the leaders, said they were treated like animals by their neighbors from the two tribes. If their children fall in love with our children and they get them pregnant, when we go to report what their children would have done, they ask if we have ever seen a cow mating with a donkey, he told the minister⁴⁰ says Tshuma. After the government received such alarming grievances from the San communities that is when it dawned to the nation of Zimbabwe that our fellow brothers and sisters are being marginalized because of their identity. Thus the government took a step of working tirelessly in trying to bring modernity to the San

community .Making sure that they are incorporated into the society and diverted from their Early Iron Age way of lives so that they settle well in the communities they are living in. The government has been working with non- governmental organisations in helping out the needs of the San people like Mtshina Primary School. Schools and clinics are being built for the San, they have been introduced to some income generating projects for their livelihood as their source of income. Their “Tshwa” language to be officialised as one of the main languages learnt in Zimbabwean schools like isiNdebele and Shona. Water and Sanitation scheme has also been introduced in Gulalikabili so that the San villages have access to clean drinking water. The Social Services Department is also helping out in giving them food and clothes. They have also been included in organisations that give free aid to people in the District.

In Mpilo Village ward 7, a clinic which is being constructed by Plan International under the programme Community Managed Sponsorship for the San in complimenting the government. This clinic is being built for the people of Tsholotsho but under the name the dedication of the San people who live in Mpilo village and villages nearby. Interviews were done in the village particularly targeting the San and the student asked how the people felt about the clinic construction. Four of the six San people who were asked how they feel about the clinic that was being built for them did excitement that the government has finally heard their cries. Miss Moyo said she does see the importance of the clinic especially for young women they can now deliver their babies the modern way in the clinic and seek immediate medical attention when they are sick.⁴¹ This shows that at least some of the San people do understand the importance of having a medical centre so that they can seek medical attention there rather than opting for indigenous traditional healing. An interview was made with a very old man who did not want to reveal his identity, when he was asked about his opinion on the clinic he quickly dismissed the matter and just said as old as he is, he has been relying on African

traditional medicine, he knows of all the tree roots, bulbs and leaves to use as cure for a certain disease for example *umgugudo* used to cure backache for men, thus the construction of the clinic is diminishing of their culture.⁴²

According to Slamonga, the prevalence of communicable diseases was less among the San people who still prefer their traditional herbs against modern medicines.⁴³

(Fig 1 Mpilo Clinic under construction ward 7 Tsholotsho) by Ndlovu Nomthandazo April 09 2016



However the same programme facilitated by Plan International for the San communities is again building a school for the San people in Mtshina Village ward 10. This school is another factor that the government and the Plan International saw it fit to be attended to as the number of dropouts from the San children as increasing. The reasons for school dropouts were that the distance to the nearest school was very far, school fess too high for them, problems with other children at school, communication with the staff was very difficult and

the children needed to assist at home/community. These are the major reasons why the San did not take education seriously. Thus the government saw it fit that a school nearer to their homes will be convenient enough for them and a new constitution recognising their language at schools nationwide will work to their favour. Hitchcock et al says of the 149 households surveyed; only nine heads of house-hold considered that all the members of their household over 10 years of age were literate, in other words had reading or writing skills. This survey was done in Tsholotsho and this is evident enough that the education issue had to be taken very serious.⁴⁴ This is evident enough for one to realise that literacy levels in the San community are very low. Thus the government is working with Plan International in constructing Mtshina Primary School ward 10 especially for the benefit of the San children as little as the ECD A and B age group. According to Madlalazi Maphosa “maybe people from the society will realise that we are human beings after all and our children will not be further marginalized and their future might be better than ours.”⁴⁵

(fig 2 Mtshina Primary School ward 10 under construction) by Nomthandazo Ndlovu May 02, 2016



The government is working very hard to ensure that the San communities that are in Tsholotsho are getting all the help possible so as to avoid further marginalisation. Income generating projects that are also being implemented by Plan International like goat pass on programme whereby people were given goats so that they rear them and sell them and get money for sending children to school and pay the funds required. Another programme is being implemented by a non-governmental organisation called Amalima. Amalima rehabilitates dams and monitors nutritional gardens and the functioning of boreholes that they drilled for the San at Sifulasengwe Village. Also there is a programme for distributing and giving out food aids like beans and maize meal for pregnant and lactating women in all the wards where the San are situated to promote proper growth for the infants and their mothers.

Piped Water Scheme was commissioned by Minister of State for Provincial Affairs Matabeleland North Province C Mathema. Tsholotsho Rural District Council noted that the San Community in ward 7 were having water shortages and could only get water from dams far away, thus they joined forces and asked for help from PLAN International as an

implementing partner. 16 solar panels were erected and Jojo tanks as the water source taps were also erected throughout the villages that were meant to benefit from the water scheme. A change was noted in the community as their water problem was solved .They were drinking clean germ free water and also did not have to walk to far away deserted areas to fetch water. Thus the Minister Mathema was called upon to commission the piped water scheme.

(fig 3 A functional tap under piped water scheme at Gulalikabili Village ward 7) by Nomthandazo Ndlovu March 12, 2016)



Moloi said that the community is very happy as they are going to benefit a lot and will not have to travel kilometres to find water and they are using taps which are easier and convenient to use than boreholes.⁴⁶

*fig 4 A picture with the happy Moloi after the interview on the piped water scheme.
(captured by Elias Pikiro March 12, 2016)*



Non- governmental organisations like Amalima and Plan International offer free aid, which gives food to the elderly who cannot fund themselves by giving them groceries like beans, cooking oil, and mealie meal. It should be noted that back then the San communities were excluded from such programmes, however it has now changed they are also gaining from these programmes which are being implemented by the NGOs. The above are the steps that the government of Zimbabwe have taken in order to bring modernisation and end marginalisation in the San communities in Tsholotsho Rural District.

2.5 Conclusion

Conclusively the above chapter has discussed the projects that the government and the NGOs have been working on in a bid to improve the social life of the San communities in ward 7 and 10 in Tsholotsho. Schools, clinics, water scheme programmes and income generating projects are underway so as to bring modernisation to their social lives. Interviews were also carried out and the San respondents seemed very happy that the government is accommodating them.

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CHAPTER 3: Change and continuity of the San lives after 1980, made by the government to empower the San in ward 7 and 10.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter in brief is about the changes and the continuity made by the government after 1980, in a bid to empower the San in Tsholotsho. The chapter will give the current status of the San social data their religion, education, poverty state welfare and so forth. Also the challenges they faced and still face when they tried to diversify with other Ndebele, Kalanga and Shona groups. This chapter will also review a string of policies adopted by the Zimbabwean government since 1980 see if whether there was any positive trend towards helping the San people in change continuing with their social life. The government's decision to reinforce anti-hunting laws and protection of wildlife was good, but the government failed to provide the San with agricultural inputs, such as cattle, donkeys, seed, and ox-drawn plough as a way to fill in the gap that had been created after the prohibiting of hunting which was another main survival skill of the San. The problems that are being faced by the San today range from food insecurity, cultural decadence, lack of education, loss of language and identity crisis. Their problems are not heard as they don't have leadership structure. There is a perception that San share the same problems which are faced by other social groups however that is not true. The also chapter looks on the effects of government policies like the introduction of CAMPFIRE and its overall impact on to the change and continuity of the San livelihood. The San people are cut from national development policies that benefit other social groups, policies such land reform programme. More is going to be highlighted in the chapter below.

3.2 Are the San indigenous or minority?

Defining who is indigenous and not is one of the complicated and hardest tasks in African context. Many different groups of people in Southern Africa have come forward with claims that they are indigenous people. Hitchcock and Vinding argue that, most African governments have until now maintained that all their citizens are indigenous or alternatively argued that there is no such a thing as an indigenous group in their country.⁴⁷ This is supported by the fact that, Africa is the continent with the longest history of human occupation and it contains the greatest range of human genetic and cultural diversity.⁴⁸ Therefore it is difficult to determine who indigenous people are who are not because the so called indigenous people have co-existed with non- indigenous people for thousand years, and in their interactions and diversifying, new identities could have come out.

It should be emphasized that the independence of Zimbabwe arrived after the Lancaster House talks of 1979 and a constitution to govern newly independent country was brokered as part compromise between the parties. It is impressive to reason that there were perhaps more pressing issues and much more important issues, to be discussed than the fate of indigenous people who did not even constitute a quarter of the population. The constitution of Zimbabwe does not clarify who is indigenous and who is not but states that everyone black is indigenous except white and Asian people.

Crawhall is of the view that political leaders came from those people who had close relations with the Europeans such as the agricultural people who have been brought into European modes of production and capitalist system. The African elite that were educated in Europe, spoke colonial language and inherited the existing administrative structures.⁴⁹ Thus Kanyike Sena proclaims that they were completely colonized mentally but they were not prepared nor financed to administer the new economical unviable conglomeration of tribes that formed the new African state.⁵⁰ In light of the “Lancaster House constitution”; it was a continuation of

colonial rule in regard to its exclusion of interests of indigenous groups. In Zimbabwe there are two groups who claim to be indigenous, the Vadema people and San people. The colonial politics of divide and rule destroyed any aspirations of San leadership and such the San were sacrificed. This lack of clarity has harnessed the processes of human rights abuses, identity crisis, cultural assimilation, loss of language, underdevelopment and so many other problems in these societies.

Most African countries have failed to pass laws that recognize and protect their indigenous populations that include Zimbabwe. Indigenous people have been harassed and controlled by their governments in name of processes such as modernization and development and when one analysis the development discourse in these countries it is discovered that they are poorest, occupying the lowest position in the social ladder especially the San in Tsholotsho. Festus Mogae was quoted “how can you have a stone-age creature continuing to exist in the time of computers? If Bushmen want to survive they must change and otherwise like the dodo they will perish”.⁵¹ It is therefore clear that the indigenous groups the San are still under a lot of marginalisation and suppression by the modern society. Also it is important to analyse how the government through several processes has and national policies have continued to marginalize the San people.

3.3 Re- examination of Zimbabwe laws and legislations.

To understand the problem of San people there is need to closely study Zimbabwe’s constitution and the country’s taking into international treaties that seek to protect San people as an indigenous group. Zimbabwe’s old constitution went through several changes and amendments but none of the amendments had anything to do with t grievances of the San people. The San recognize themselves as an indigenous group and country constitution does not recognize this status. The lack of recognition constitutes as one the major problems facing

indigenous peoples today. Colchester, says that prejudicial attitudes towards Indigenous people way of life, in national laws and government policies remains prevalent, in opposition to international human rights laws.⁵² Lack of recognition and discrimination are a remainder of colonial rule which was continued in independent Africa.

It should be noted that the Zambian government have chosen to assist only the San people who live in government created refugee camps, all those San people who live outside the camps don't receive any assistance. This is a sign that the San continue to be side-lined and unrecognised. Hitchcock and Vinding assert that the Zambian government does not recognize San as being citizens, seeing them primarily as refugees or immigrants from Angola.⁵³ One speaker noted that in Rwanda the Batwa Pygmies were not even allowed the right to the claim of calling themselves Rwandans.⁵⁴ This is an example of bluntness of government policies that have catalyzed the processes of discrimination, social, political and economic marginalization. What is shocking and understandable though is that most African countries are signatories of the African Charter that explicitly guarantees rights of citizens, in which indigenous people as citizens of their respectable countries are entitled to. These international statutes have been unused or ignored when dealing with the San community.

Zimbabwe's Declaration of Rights legislation states that, every person in Zimbabwe is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual that is to say the right associated with his race, tribe, and place of origin, colour, creed or sex. In regard of this law the, constitution recognizes the San as citizens of Zimbabwe. Madzudzo, et al, points out that, added to this is a number of guarantees including the guarantee of protection from deprivation of property.⁵⁵ The government has not done justice to these legislations, choosing to ignore the law since there has not been much change in the social lives of the San in Tsholotsho. The San people today feel that there are inferior as compared to other social

groups in the country the Ndebele and the Kalanga. Since early 1980s people from different ethnic groups have been resettled at the places that originally belong to San in Tsholotsho.

The Lancaster constitution introduced Rural District Councils under the Rural Districts Act. These RDCs act as local representative of the central government and the running of the district is overseen by District Administrators. Madzudzo, et al, is of the view that development is defined at higher levels and RDCs tending to sacrifice minority interests in the name of national or collective interests. Consideration of powerless minority groups like San in development plans is not always guaranteed.⁵⁶ Article 1 (1) of UN Declaration on the Right to development states that, the right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all *peoples* are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.⁵⁷ African indigenous groups have not enjoyed this right especially the San of Tsholotsho as they continue to be unheard and their social life undeveloped, the only light in the end of their tunnel has appeared in the past year or two when the government has been working with the NGOs in developing the lives by constructions of schools and hospitals in ward 7 and 10.

Zimbabwe underwent through difficult economic problems in the late 1990s owing to the Structural Adjustment Programmes and this saw the government reducing its support to the RDCs. San respondents during the interviews blamed the government on their current situation. Respondents blamed the RDC in particular, saying that it took over the government's projects which are aimed at developing the San so that the San will remain as the subordinates of the Ndebele and Kalanga.⁵⁸ Just out of interest sake, in the history of Tsholotsho RDC, a San has never been elected as a counsellor. Counsellors play a paramount role in advocating for and representation of community interests and a San counsellor can act

as their advocate for their plights so that they can be developed socially, however they has never been a San leader in the RDC showing further neglecting of the San .

Respondents mentioned one incident in the early 2000s when the government was giving out each San homestead with two cattle, ox- drawn plough, and seed. They say the project never reached all the San wards and the equipment disappeared at RDCs offices. No cattle were distributed or ox- drawn plough. Only a few San households benefitted from this programme, but they only got one ox-drawn plough per ten households this happened at eMavimileni line only all other lines never benefitted.⁵⁹ This is an example of how the RDC have sabotaged San interests and put their needs aside. Most San were determined that if given cattle and farming land they grow their own crops to make out a living than to continue working for Ndebele and Kalanga. Some San households, who have acquired cattle through some sort of lease system called *ukusisela* in Ndebele and traditional healing, are farmers and they enjoy an improved and changed social life than to be labelled and known as the “hunters and gatherers.”

3.4 San designation of their own leadership

The population structure in Tsholotsho District ward 7 and 10 has affected the issues of leadership within the San community and that should be looked at. There are three different ethnic groups in Tsholotsho the Kalanga are the majority around 50%, Ndebele are around 48%, and then the San who are the smallest ethnic group are well around 2%.⁶⁰ As noted earlier, that during independence power was taken by people who had closer relationship with the colonizers. Before independence, the evictions of 1960s which led to the Ndebele and Kalanga resettling in areas which belonged to San, meant that the San lost their land and freedom in these places. The colonizers then chose the Ndebele and Kalanga to take posts such as headman, *umlisa*, village heads, and *sobhuku* thus neglecting the San people in the

leadership posts. Elderly respondents said that before the coming of colonial rule the San did not have a chief but they had leaders who were the elderly and much more experienced in life and the society who had the capability of decision making and leadership.

However there has been changing after the colonial rule in the San villages, there are now San village heads at, ward 7 in Phelandaba, in the following lines of Sanqinyaqna, Sifulasengwe, Gariya 1, Thula, Emganwini and Xhanixhani. It is a result taken by the San elders, to appoint their own leaders after realization that the chosen Ndebele and Kalanga leadership subvert and their interests. The San claimed that they were encouraged and motivated to do so by a Tsholotsho RDC member whom they only recognized as Mayoyo. In their accounts they said Mayoyo pushed this idea to the Local Governance office, where their village heads were recognized and that by the time he left office he was pushing them to lobby for appointment of San Chief as a way of developing themselves as the San politically and have someone talk for them on their behalf so that their social needs are known and looked at by the government.⁶¹ Plans to have the San chief have reached a brick wall. This idea of a San chief may never be achieved considering they are a numerical minority.

3.5 CAMPFIRE: Development or bogus-development?

Tsholotsho CAMPFIRE was seen by many as an opportunity for the community to benefit from the resources that Tsholotsho is gifted with. It was introduced in 1989, the new government of Zimbabwe had like its precursor failed to control wildlife or introduce strict anti- hunting laws. However one should not completely blame the government in this initiative because it was following and using the same old colonial policies embedded in the constitution. Madzudzo highlights that CAMPFIRE, sought to localize authority over the management and conservation and use of wildlife.⁶² The Tsholotsho RDC took hold of the relationship and saw an opportunity to make good financial returns.

It should be highlighted that the San reside on the communal land and this land belongs to the State where, people are allowed to enjoy the outputs of land without destroying its substance. So the introduction of CAMPFIRE meant that the government was merely taking what belongs to it. Madzudzo goes on to say that through the localization of enforcement, San were completely cut off from wildlife in the name of development.⁶³ During colonial era wildlife was classified as state property that is it belonged to the government and the independent Zimbabwe it was now a communal property. In the community the San did not hold the same social status with other groups, thus every member of community became a watchdog over the community property. San respondents highlighted that if they were seen eat meat at their households they were either harassed or reported to the authorities.⁶⁴ Game poaching which was very frequent and it was being linked to the San community. In the colonial time the San could have hunted unseen and it consisted as one of the major economic activity, but with hunting scratched out, San became beggars because one of their major socio-economic activities had been blacklisted. One San informant said that had it not been for the presence of Ndebele and Kalanga who employed them as cattle herders and field workers most of them would have died because there was no other means of survival left for them since the wildlife was protected all in the name of “development”.

The San live near the boundary of Hwange National Park, especially those in ward 7 that means they are under constant threats of wild animals which escape from the park. Animals such as elephants, hyena, lions and wild pigs destroy the San fields and livestock frequently and there is nothing much they can do about it because of the imposed Acts that protect the animals. In accordance with the law the agreement the CAMPFIRE funds are supposed to be used for community development projects, such as road maintenance, dam maintenance and borehole sinking.

The San respondents asserted that they wish that the money should be distributed at household level to help them so that they buy food and other utilities such as school uniform, school fees and paying of tax. Surprising as it, San people are the most affected people by wandering animals in Tsholotsho and one can be forced to think that they should get more “reparations” since they’re also poor and food insecure. However the situation in Tsholotsho is the antithesis of this. Other wards that are far from trouble animals get equal share of funds of which that is unfair to the San because they are the mostly affected victims. There is no visible community infrastructural development whatsoever in the community. The cases of corruption about disbursement of CAMPFIRE funds at Tsholotsho RDC have not gone unnoticed and ignored with several high ranking officials suspended or thrown into jail. This to the San is perceived as a deliberate venture to keep them poor, their wish is that they should be allowed to take down on the animals that trouble their fields. But there are strict laws against any danger posed to wildlife.

Other deficits of the government are witnessed in the lack of responsibility between the Game and National Parks, CAMPFIRE and Tsholotsho RDC. The San community lives in midst of wildlife and they have paid dearly for this. There are many cases that have been reported where people got killed or attacked by these wandering wild animals, one of the incidents happened in 2015 in Ward 7 when a man was killed by an elephant. There is delay in taking of action by the Parks and Wildlife management, insisting on several occasions that the San should vacate their place, because they are settled in an area designated for wildlife, clearly that is protecting animals over human lives.

This negligence has greatly affected the San for quite a long time because the little crops they will be having at their fields, where they will be pinning their hopes for food will be destroyed by animals and that means re planting them if they have the seeds if not then they are left desperate. The Parks and Wildlife have stressed their wish to see the end of *imilaga*,

which they feel are too much closer to the boundary of the Park which affects the San because they benefit from keeping the Ndebele and Kalanga cattle at *ukulagisa*. The San also complain that the new rule set by the Parks department, which stipulates that, any person seen inside the park will be shot is too strict, because during the *lagisa* season cattle can jump into fence of the Park and that means their lives will be in danger when rescuing the cattle. According to Hitchcock and Vinding, such legislation has not only resulted in individuals and sometimes whole communities being arrested or jailed and in some cases tortured or even killed for having allegedly been poaching.⁶⁵ This insecurity makes the San to continue wallowing in poverty and underdevelopment. Respondents also maintained that the CAMPFIRE has violated its mandate of giving San households meat when they shoot an animal, they only leave offal's and go away with the meat.

More so the San respondents complained that they are the ones who should be benefiting from the royalties through the use of Matopo Hills as a tourist destiny. Rock art painting today constitute one of the fascinating stories about the African continent which was created by the San themselves. Matopo Hills paintings have attracted international tourists and expert anthropologists and sadly the proceeds are tunnelled to the coffers of Ministry of Tourism. This is an example of how the indigenous knowledge systems of the indigenous people have been used by powerful groups while the owners continue wallowing in poverty.

3.6 Human Rights

The issue of human rights amongst the minority groups around Southern Africa has remained a very critical one yet vital. The most common example of human rights abuse among minority groups has been use of violence. The San people according to Hitchcock and Vinding in Southern Africa are caught up in violent conflicts, such as the San in Angola who were being harassed and killed during the country's long civil war which lasted for 25 years

between the government and UNITA rebels led by Jonas Savimbi.⁶⁶ The San as a vulnerable group faces challenges such as rape of women and compulsory military service. Suzman highlights that the San people joined the South Africa Defence Forces during the fight against the apartheid regime.⁶⁷

In Zimbabwe the San men, women, and children fought alongside with the Ndebele and Kalanga during the liberation struggle and they were loyal to ZIPRA, military wing of ZAPU under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo. Post independent Zimbabwe could not come out with a clear cut reconciliation programme to solve the war conflict between the two revolutionary parties. There were several incidents in the early 1980s when the ZIPRA and ZANLA clashed over several military posts and the discovery of arms scandal took the matters into another level. The government started a project to wipe out chuff, Gukurahundi, and the dissidents ex-ZPRA were targets using the government sponsored ,and well trained militia ,called Fifth Brigade. What started as a project to fight dissidents soon became an ethnic cleansing programme, where the Ndebele and Kalanga who were loyal to ZAPU became targets. The San who were living in Tsholotsho at that time were recorded the highest toll of casualties, were not spared in this genocide- style killing.

No official statics have been recorded on the number of the San casualties, but areas like Cawunajena, Gibixhegu, Pelandaba and St Wilfreds largely San communities were also hit by the violence. Madzudzo points out that in most cases there are reports of whole villages being rounded up and assaulted, with fatalities arising. In other instances the San were resettled and those who had the opportunity fled to Botswana. Many indigenous people have been forced from their homes, been internally displaced or have crossed international borders and become refugees.⁶⁸ The government then failed to introduce post conflict resolution programmes that would enable the San to claim compensation as they lost property and others their loved ones

in the violence. Thus in fear of such a diabolic act the San have chosen to distance themselves from politics, thus destroying any wish to participate in leadership issues.

Another example outside Zimbabwe is of the San people living in the Caprivi Strip, which is contended between Botswana, Namibia and Zambia. The apartheid policies also affected the San people. San people are caught in crossfire and they end migrating from their homelands choosing to be refugees. Hitchcock and Vinding go on to highlight that living in foreign countries as refugees is not an easy option for anyone worse off the San people as they complain of harassment in the camps and rape of their women.⁶⁹

San respondents also complained that they do not receive equal treatment in Tsholotsho as compared to the Ndebele or Kalanga they live with. They said that they were refused by local leadership to fish in the nearby pools and if they were caught fishing they would pay a fine of goat to village court but the Ndebele and the Kalanga are allowed to fish. Other groups are however allowed to fish or catch birds without any interference from the local community. This is neglecting and oppressing the San at its peak. They mentioned that for them to fish they were told to and apply for fishing license from the office of DA, something that is clearly and totally impossible.

3.7 Conclusion

In conclusion the above chapter was about an analysis of the government policies and national laws towards the San people. The government has ignored most of the San problems and it has attended only a countless of their grievances. The Constitution of Zimbabwe does not acknowledge San's legitimate claims of being indigenous people, and this failure has led to worse consequences. It has emerged that the fate of all indigenous people in Africa are alike, as none of African leaders come from being hunters –gatherers who claim to be indigenous. The relationship between the African leaders and colonizers has made it a point

that the same discriminatory laws have been maintained for the latter benefit. The San people have been shunned from practicing their culture in name of development processes such as introduction of CAMPFIRE, Game reserves and many others. These policies have excluded the San from enjoying sovereignty in the district like any other social group in Zimbabwe. The leadership of Rural District Council has a turned out to sacrificing minority interests in favour of the majority interests. The San have been denied the enjoyment of right to development. They have become victims of human rights abuses as they are discriminated against by fellow neighbours, who view them as inferiors and a useless tribe.

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CONCLUSION

The main thrust of this research was to relieve the colonial and post- colonial history of San people of Tsholotsho Zimbabwe. The research sought to fulfil the knowledge gap that might have been left by other historians and the San as an indigenous group have a little written about their history. This skip makes this research worth studying because the indigenous people cultures are on the brink of no longer existing. Salvaging the history of San people is the only way, to revive and save the fading San culture. It is important to study the history of the San as an indigenous people because for thousands of years they have been marginalized, neglected and discriminated they have managed to hold back some of their cultural practices.

The San people as revealed by this research are the original inhabitants of the Western part of Zimbabwe and place names such Gibixhegu, Cawunajena, Gariya, Xanixani, Gulalikabili only to mention a few, establish their ancestry. Many of the San people in Zimbabwe have originated from Botswana and some came from Namibia and Cape Town. In Botswana and Namibia it was a resting place after running away from the ruthless Afrikaners and later on the British. However in Zimbabwe they predate the arrival of any social group. By the time of arrival of the colonists the San people were displaced in various groups in the Western Zimbabwe such as Tsholotsho, Bulilamangwe and Hwange.

The colonial rule through several legislations institutionalized dispossession of San people of their ancestral and customary lands through the creation of game reserves and resettlement and left them landless. The rock art has sustained the San outlook as hunters and gathers and is another form of evidence that they originate from the Early Iron Age times. Chapter one discussed of their origins and how they ended up settling in Tsholotsho. Chapter one also discussed about the relations that the San had with the Kalanga and the Ndebele's, how they were treated as subordinates because of their poverty. The chapter also talked about the San rock art lifestyle, the socio economic consequences of the colonial legislation and its

implications on the San social lives. Colonialists passed laws that suppressed the San like forbidding hunting whereas that was one of the major livelihoods of the San. The chapter went on to explore deeper looking at these issues and what the reaction of the San was.

Then chapter two talked about how the San way of life was before 1980 basing especially on their social lives. The San during the 1920s had scattered groups that lived in what today is called Hwange. Their hunting and gatherers nature and that they were nomadic people who never settle in one area, they were always on the move from time to time and also the wooden tools that they used. Their leadership ways are also discussed in chapter two, an elderly person who had lived within the group for a long time and had a good character was considered as their leader. The chapter went further to talk about discussed about the role of government and the NGOs that they have played in the development of San people in terms of their education and social welfare, construction of infrastructures like a school and a clinic and income generating projects that were to be run by the San for their benefit and as to bring modernity to their social life in wards 7 and 10. The construction of the school and clinic also revealed how some San people reacted to the construction of schools and clinics in contrary to their culture, how some members of the San community viewed education and clinic as factors meant to dilute their culture.

In a nutshell the last chapter that is chapter three talked about the change and continuity that were made by the government after 1980 in a bid to empower the San in Tsholotsho. Chapter three talked of national policies and legislations adopted that have marginalized the San people from the processes of development, access to resources, and social services. The example that was talked of is of the government policies CAMPFIRE programme which was introduced in 1989 which has cut the vital link between the San people and natural resources and the violation of the human rights. The lack of recognition of San and the laws that protect

San people have accelerated the processes of discrimination, especially the physical uniqueness of San people thus causing a huge negative impact in their lives.

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