



JUTTA VOGEL STIFTUNG

Kulturerhalt in den Wüsten Afrikas

## Kalahari Desert San ("Bushman") Heritage Preservation

Year-End Report to the Jutta Vogel Stiftung  
December, 2010

Megan Biesele · Kalahari Peoples Fund · Austin, Texas USA

The pictures sent with this report can be augmented on request with many more as well as a 14-image Powerpoint of heritage preservation activities undertaken in Namibia in 2010. Background to this report was presented in the 2008 proposal made to JVS titled "Ju|'hoan San Heritage Preservation for Community-Based Curriculum and Web Dissemination", in the shorter piece written for the JVS website, "Kalahari Desert San ("Bushman") Heritage Preservation, 2009 – 2010," and in our Year-End Report 2009.

We first mention again the book already forwarded to JVS: Ju|'hoan Folktales: Transcriptions and English Translations. Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing. First Voices Program, also at [http://comp.ling.utexas.edu/tsmoon/KPF/juhoan\\_primer.pdf](http://comp.ling.utexas.edu/tsmoon/KPF/juhoan_primer.pdf). During 2010 material was assembled by the Ju|'hoan Transcription Group (JTG) toward two further books, one of all the heroine-story texts in the collection, and one of healing narratives. Witwatersrand University Press has been approached about these publications, the first of which is to be called *The Beautiful Antbear Maiden: Ju|'hoan Heroine Tales in Transcription and Translation*, and the second, *N/ohm Narratives* (N/ohm is the Ju|'hoan word for spiritual healing energy).

During the months of June through August of 2010, a group of six transcribers working at the Norwegian-funded Captain Kxao Kxami Community Learning and Development Centre (CLDC) in Tsumkwe, Namibia completed the transcription of 78 audio files. These files included recordings of the Xamsa political meetings involving the unlawful Herero settlement of the area in 1991, as well as several



new healing narratives which are to be included in the new book mentioned above. Fifty-one of the 78 audio files covered recent political meetings held in the Tsumkwe area between June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and focused on the most recent illegal Herero invasion which began in April, 2008. Over six hours of audio recordings were captured from these meetings and their translations are being used to assist the Ju|'hoansi of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in their legal battle with the Hereros and the Namibian government over land rights issues. An additional 131 audio files were left with the Transcription Group who, for the first time, are beginning year-round work on the translations under their own supervision.

Additionally, the summer of 2010 saw an increase in Ju|'hoan trainees, mostly younger people, who were willing to come in during the afternoons and study language skills and basic computing from the transcribers. A total of thirteen trainees, ranging in age from late teens to the age of fifty, came in to 1) learn the basic components of reading and writing in Ju|'hoansi and 2) learn the basics of the ELAN program which our project uses to transcribe the Ju|'hoan language.



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Transcription and translation were continued for three months in 2010 by Megan Biesele and Ju|'hoan trainees with the help of Victoria Goodman, our new technical assistant, at the Tsumkwe Centre (CLDC). This work was aimed at both scholarly and community use. We also successfully used for the entire time the KPF-funded, semi-detached addition to the CLDC, completed in August, 2009, for the activities of the transcription project and its archives. During July, 2010, we had a total of 17 overseas visitors, including development workers, educators, anthropologists, and archaeologists. One of the latter, Dr. Tilman Lenssen-Erz, decided in the course of his visit to begin using the services of the Ju|'hoan Transcription Group, and has donated copies of Brandberg rock-paintings made by Harald Pager to decorate the new transcription room.

During 2010, the literate trainees continued to collaborate with Megan Biesele in 1) transcribing and annotating texts with the use of the professional orthography adopted for Ju|'hoan, 2) translating them into English for a number of purposes in anthropology and linguistics, and 3) making selections from them for educational books and for public online and community archives. Before the fieldwork period, Biesele edited and translated the body of completed trainee transcriptions so they could be checked with trainees prior to final publication.



Thus, with the publications and transcriptions carried out under Jutta Vogel Stiftung funding during 2009 and 2010, the project's commitment to respect for both the ancient lifeways and contemporary creativity of young Ju|'hoansi has been well advanced. More and more, the trainees and their community themselves feel moral ownership of the project, which is at the same time increasingly creative in its use of information technology. The project is now ongoing, and the JTG have been asked by the Namibian Government to register as a community-based organization with their Ministry of Trade and Industry. This achievement was described by a Namibian educator as the result of "empowerment and development work in the truest senses." We believe the Jutta Vogel Stiftung can be proud to have supported this work.

