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Margo and Martin Russell

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AFRIKANERS OF THE KALAHARI  
White Minority in a Black State

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# AFRIKANERS OF THE KALAHARI

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MARGO and MARTIN RUSSELL

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## A note on terminology

The issue of what are the proper terms for the various ethnic groups in a plural society is a vexed one, since local attitudes towards the less powerful and less privileged groups rapidly reduce any appellation to a perceived perjorative. A common solution is to adopt a term used by some group other than one's own, thereby freeing oneself from the burden of cumulated contempt. Thus the editors of *The Oxford history of South Africa* chose to call Bushmen *San*, the term by which they were known to Hottentots, or *Khoi*, whose subject people they were from time to time. The Botswana government at first called the Bushmen by the English *Bushmen*, rather than the Tswana *Masarwa*, but have now settled for the Kgalagari *Basarwa*.

Place names can carry a similar emotional charge. We have used both *Namibia* and *South West Africa*, loosely guided by context. Ghanzi itself officially became *Gantsi* in 1973, but has since reverted. The historical record shows Khanzi, Chanse, Ghanzé, *inter alia*.

Bushman language groups introduce an additional complication. Not only does each language have its own terms for each group, but the words themselves challenge the limits of our alphabet by introducing an unusual range of sounds, upon the representation of which there is not yet any firm agreement. We have reluctantly contributed to the growing consensus by adopting the mystifying orthography /, //, ≠, !, of Barnard (1975), Silberbauer (1965) and others; we would have preferred the well-established Zulu and Xhosa notation for clicks.

We have followed A. Kuper (1970) rather than Schapera and van der Merwe (1943, 1945) in using *Kgalagari* rather than *Bakgalagadi*, since it has the advantage of making clear the connection between the people and the place. We have forsaken consistency in using *Tswana* rather than *Batswana*, but *Batawana*, *Bamangwato* etc. for the constituent Tswana tribes.

Because we have drawn liberally upon the transcript of tape-recorded conversations made in the Kalahari, inconsistency in terminology has

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been unavoidable. The following list of synonyms may eliminate confusion:

Damara = Herero

Hotnot = Hottentot = Khoi = Nama

African = Bantu = black = kaffir

Batswana = Bechuana = Motswana = Tswana

Currency presents a problem. We have not attempted to convert sums into contemporary monetary equivalents or familiar currencies. Before 1975 Botswana shared South African currency, £sd, until the introduction of the rand in 1961 when R1 equalled £0.5. In 1975 Botswana adopted its own currency, the pula, with P1 equalling R1 until 1976 when the pula was revalued 5 per cent.

We have retained the colloquial (Dutch) land measure, morgen, about two acres or 0.85 hectares. The typical Ghanzi farm unit of 5000 morgen is 4250 hectares.

We have changed the names of living people and their farms to preserve their anonymity.

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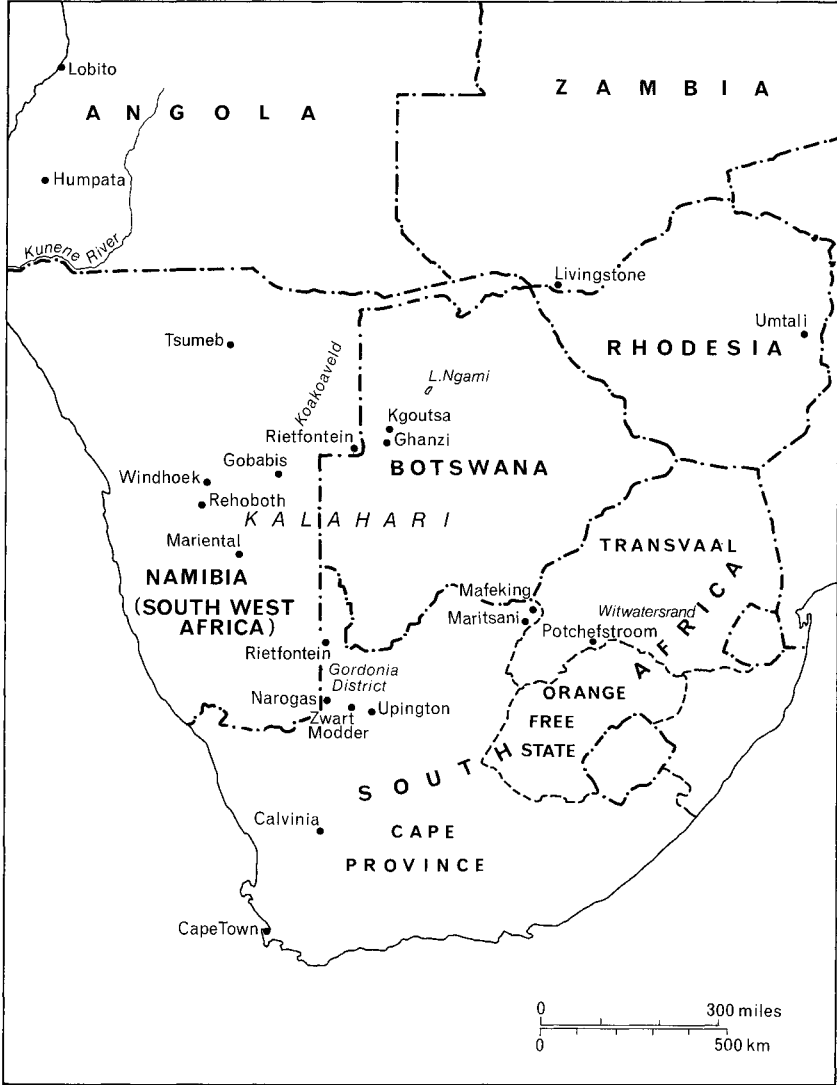


Fig. 1. Southern Africa