

the author comments about Japanese commitment to the group and the pressure on group members to perform. Tabb writes:

Because social ties and personal sense of worth are connected closely to group memberships and loyalty is key to acceptance, the pressure can be unbearably intense--much of the function of Japanese education and corporate indoctrination procedures is to strengthen the individual to bear it (p. 25).

This is ethnocentric and ill-advised. Japanese have a profoundly different orientation of the individual to the group. It is true that the pressure may be intense, but Japanese have a need to be in a group and a tolerance for group activities beyond the comprehension of most Americans. Companies may use the group identity in a cynical way and Japanese children are enculturated into group activities just as are American children into individualism and self interest, but I doubt that Tabb would use the term "indoctrinated" for the latter. Tabb appears to regard the natural state for human beings to be the same as the American idea of the self, with Japanese needing to be trained to bear the terrible pressure of something different.

Tabb's book is also very interesting in terms of his discussion of global issues involved in the Japanese economic system and Japan's relationship with the United States. I was struck by one comment in particular. Tabb discusses how world insularity is being challenged by international trade and the global economy. He writes:

How the Japanese respond will not be in the control of the sophisticated West handlers whom we have grown used to seeing on our televisions speaking English, with their intimate grasp of who we are, and their clear agenda of what they want us to think of Japan. The future course of events will be decided by domestic politics and consciousness of more typical Japanese, and we do not know them very well. (p. 327)

I agree that we in the United States do not know typical Japanese very well, but it is one of our great challenges to try and learn about them.

The Postwar Japanese System is an interesting and useful book. William Tabb handles the complexity of the subject well and provides the reader with many possible avenues for further thought and study.

Dividing the Commons: Politics, Policy, and Culture in Botswana by Pauline Peters. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994. xv + pp. 273, index.

Reviewed by Dan Bauer, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Lafayette College.

Pauline Peters' "Dividing the Commons" is many things. It is a descriptive analysis of political processes surrounding access to herding resources (land and water) in Botswana over this century. It is also an attempt to further debate on development policy itself, through a masterful analysis of an ethnographic and historical example. Two features are instrumental in uniting the work: Garrett Hardin's paradigm of the "tragedy of the commons," and the image of the fence as the device that either makes good neighbors, or divides us from one another, and from ourselves. Hardin's famous 1968 model of the "tragedy of the commons" is seductively simple. In using common resources it is always to the individual's interest to add an increment of use to the common property because that individual gets the whole return on that increment but shares with the community the cost

of the reduced common resource. For example, should ten of us be using a field that optimally supports ten cows with each owning a single cow the system is in good shape. However, it is to my individual advantage to add a second cow. Eleven cows will overgraze the field a little, reducing the milk yield from each cow, but I have two of the reduced portions. Since each individual is in this situation, the commons will inevitably be destroyed. This paradigm has been applied to every conceivable resource, from global warming to talking loudly in the theater. Pauline Peters writes a contemporary history of the process of dividing the commons as it has been applied in the herding-dominated nation of Botswana.

Peters argues that we cannot understand the establishment and dismemberment of the commons in Botswana without analyzing the three forces of her subtitle: politics, policy, and culture. Implicit in the analysis is the assumption that one must also understand the ecology of herding in the region. Peters devoted an intensive period of fieldwork (1979-80) to firsthand observation of politics in the district of Kgatleng in southeast Botswana. The detailed understanding of the positions of local leaders she provides makes it clear why the commons did not evolve into quite the tragedy Hardin might have envisioned. When boreholes (wells for watering animals) were established, it ended the material restriction on herd expansion imposed by shortages of water. One might have expected that overgrazing would have followed. Local leaders' interests, however, were not merely financial but also partly political. They benefited to some degree both from exclusivity and from greater inclusion. As political leaders, they needed both the support of the people who would benefit from rights to borehole access being narrowly defined and the support of those with an interest in inclusion. The complexity met by local political leaders coping with a variety of interests moderated the tendency to move toward the Hardin tragedy.

Beyond the balancing act of local politics, Peters sees policy as having equally important effects. The speed at which boreholes were established was largely the result of the development policies of the protectorate in the 1930s. Policy is subject to more than local forces. Policy is characterized by debate, debates over such issues as how best to develop unexploited resources, over the virtues, or deficiencies, of native land-tenure systems, or over the means to protect fragile environments. Such policy debates are influenced, not just by the problems emerging on the regional scene, but also by the larger debates of the period. Such debates are formed in the larger cultural arena of policy makers. The author examines the shifting discourse found in government documents of the 1930s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. She does this to the end of "...draw(ing) out their logic more explicitly than they do themselves and to show how these expert statements are marshaled to explain, guide, and justify a series of administrative and political actions" (Peters 1994: 19). For example, the failures of the Tribal Grazing Policy of 1975 are traced by Peters to an inappropriate application of the thesis of Hardin's Tragedy paradigm and to a distorted view of herd and range management as it was practiced by Tswana herders. Culture comes into play in two major ways. In some time periods, we can see the culture of policy makers as dominated by the Hardin paradigm. Policy makers also lacked a thorough understanding of culture (of Tswana practices). Peters sees these cultural features as contributing to policy failure. Culture comes into the analysis in other interesting ways as well.

That the chief has been cast as a "hero" in Tswana culture constrains what chiefs can and cannot do, as well as how others must deal with them. It, of course, also effects how colonial figures and their policies were received, and even how they view themselves. The larger-than-life, 1930s resident commissioner Lieutenant Colonel Charles Rey comes across as having a view of himself and his job that had a powerful parallel with the Tswana depiction of chief at that point in history.

From a theoretical perspective, "Dividing the Commons" is not explicitly Weberian.

Nevertheless, Pauline Peters' work resonates nicely for those of us steeped in that tradition. The analysis makes the historical influence of ideas central without ignoring the roles played by the more material factors of economics and ecology. The analysis portrays the historical process behind current grazing policy as having parallels with that of the nineteenth century enclosures of English history. In such historical processes, parties contend over the very meanings of things and acts, as well as wealth itself. To fence or not to fence creates and destroys wealth, and it alters or maintains the way people relate to one another as members of communities and of status groups.

The organization of the book gives us a good understanding of the work's breadth and depth. The work begins with an analysis of the historical process that transformed the precolonial state, called the "Morafe," first into a colonial reserve and then into a district. Seeing Morafe's organization as a named political and cultural entity under a chief with an internal structure rank and wealth is essential to the understanding of the events that followed. As we might expect, the precolonial states were not simply replaced with Western administrative structure, but went through a transformation characterized by political maneuvering by actors on all sides. Pauline Peters represents the 1930s as a watershed in water development. This was the period of the great depression and of great development in the form of boreholes. One senses that it was also a period of great dramas, a little like that depicted in John Huston's film, "Chinatown," set in water-starved southern California. As with any process involving major resources, boreholes created both beneficiaries and privileged. The terms of what has become the debate were set in the 1950s and 1960s. Were policies causing degradation instead of development? And, looking back, was the British government motivated by concerns over such issues as the causes of overgrazing or by imperialistic ambitions? Who would pay? Should access to resources be public or private?

We are then presented with cattle herding as it appears to those attempting to cope with making a living from cattle: to family strategies, intrafamily strategies and syndicates. The critical issues revolve around access to water and pasturage, and to who and what should be fixed or mobile. The situation is perhaps not as dramatic as that described by Evans-Pritchard for the Nuer, where the flooding and receding of the Nile places pasturage at times under water, and at other times too far from water. In Botswana, individuals and groups feel that they are hemmed in by a rising tide of other entities: syndicates, farms, etc.

Peters moves from the level of families, where negotiation over cattle is a major focus, to the level of syndicates. At this level negotiation focuses on competing claims to access to water and pasture. Syndicates, like other organizations, are faced with the problem of regulating numbers. In the simplest terms, with too few members it is difficult to defend claims; with too many, prosperity is threatened. Tensions must be resolved over what constitutes membership, who are heirs, and the rights of hired labor. It was in the context of the contradictions engendered by tensions over grazing and water claims that The Tribal Grazing Land Policy of 1975 was promulgated. The other key context for the development of this policy is the paradigm of the tragedy of the commons. Framing the argument in this way placed the blame for overuse on traditional practices and sets a foundation for exclusive rights. In complex ways these more exclusive rights to borehole access confounded with grazing rights helped create greater degrees of social inequality.

"Dividing the Commons" successfully allows us to understand the historical activity through which the commons are being divided in Botswana through examining the perspectives of actors at all levels of the process, from the herding family to those involved over more abstract issues of policy. The book is of interest to those focused on southern Africa, to those devoted to policy, and to those struggling to successfully place local ethnography in larger contexts.

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Whereas women in some parts of Africa have been involved in trade since at least the seventeenth century, in the past 25 years African market women have become the subject of considerable academic interest. Much of the ethnographic and sociological research conducted in the marketplaces and streets throughout sub-Saharan Africa has been guided by one of two major goals.

First, feminist scholars have sought insights into fundamental questions about the relationship between capitalism (or "economic development") and patriarchy. Historical references to powerful market "queens" in precolonial West Africa, for example, generated debate about whether customary exchange and property relations gave women in general the means to accumulate wealth and status or whether, like today, gendered access to resources limited opportunities for all but a small minority of women. Although the frustratingly sketchy historical record may leave this particular debate unresolved, contemporary observations of more and more women throughout the continent turning to petty trade out of economic desperation are beyond dispute. In the current era of structural adjustment, economic reforms intended to "unleash" capitalist development have not freed women from the gender norms that grant them heavy domestic responsibilities but few resources or freedoms. For many, then, small-time commerce represents one of the few if not only options for survival.

A key question now has become to understand how women working even under this bleak imperative can find in the marketplace a measure of status, autonomy and solidarity-how, in other words, they find in trading, if not necessarily an escape from poverty, then perhaps the means to challenge oppressive gender norms. Also needed is more attention to differentiation and stratification between and within groups of traders. The many ethnographies of small-time vendors and the relatively fewer accounts of commercial