

## Two Songs from the Kalahari Desert

The Naro and G/ui language groups are part of the San culture of southern Africa, with a long heritage based in the Kalahari Desert area. These two groups live in Botswana, southern Africa.

The recordings were made under the auspices of the Naro Language Project, who maintain the copyright of the recordings.

Naro Language Project

PO Box 500

Gantsi

Botswana

The research and recordings were made by Kedra Larsen and Paul Neeley, working in conjunction with Lutheran Bible Translators. The full recording has nearly 50 tracks of Bible verse readings and indigenous-style songs based on those verses.

There are a number of common 'musical motifs' used by these cultures, and new songs can reuse those motifs with new lyrics. Many of such motifs are related to various animals in the area. For example, the song based on Mark 1:27 uses the "giraffe" musical motif.

It is typical for songs in these San cultures to have a huge amount of "vocables," sung syllables without lexical meaning, and very few textual lines (perhaps less than 5% of the singing). For the Naro recordings, the singers with short texts had one microphone, the other singers had another microphone (or two), and the lyrical lines were mixed just a little louder than the vocables.

The song by G/ui Christians is accompanied by an instrument sometimes called a "thumb piano" in English, which they call "dengho." It has thin metal strips plucked with the thumbs, and has pieces of metal attached to give the sound a thickened, buzzing quality.